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THE

CHATELAINE

OF THE

ROSES

A Romance of St. Bartholomew's Night

AND

OTHER TALES

BY

MAURICE FRANCIS EGAN

Author of "Jasper Thorn," "Patrick Desmond," "Jack Chumleigh," "Vocation of Edward Conway," "A Marriage of Reason," "How They Worked Their Way," Etc. Etc.

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A Few Fore Words.

There are some young persons in whom the author of this book has an unusual interest; but he cannot induce them to read history;—and, above all, they will not remember dates. Therefore he prints "The Chatelaine of the Roses" for them, on condition that they will study its historical background and look up the dates. It suits most the elder of these young persons because it is a "grown up" story. (She hates "stories for children"!) The other tales were written, on the same condition, for younger persons:—thus, the author hopes, pleasing all tastes from eleven to fifteen!

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THE CHÂTELAINE OF THE ROSES:

A ROMANCE OF ST. BARTHOLOMEW'S NIGHT.

I.

THE COMING OF THE HUGUENOT.

THE afternoon sunlight fell through the clustering vines covering a covered balcony which the Italians call a loggia, and made a halo about the rich auburn tresses of a young girl who stood looking down on the tangled garden beneath. She had a sweet face—a face specially sweet now, as it was lit up with a smile. Her eyes were soft and brown, and her skin tinged with a roseate hue, more pronounced in the cheeks and very pronounced at the lips; her mouth was somewhat too large for the Cupid's bow so much admired by the painters, but her

teeth were white and the lips parting, showed them so well, that even the conventional artist might have forgiven the defect, as he would have considered it. Her figure was tall, with the grace of good health and exercise. Her hands and the parts of her forearm exposed by her white satin and pearl-embroidered sleeve, were by no means so white as the neck around which a triple string of pearls wound. The sun had done its work and the small hands that grasped the railing of the loggia looked capable enough.

The garden beneath her was a tangle of roses; splendid flowers, crimson with golden hearts lay at her feet on a silver salver.

"I will!" she said, softly to herself, as the color grew deeper in her cheeks and the smile parted her lips again. "I will!"

She measured the distance from the loggia to the terrace below it. The apartment in which she stood was extended beyond the ground floor of the château. It was a sort of detached summer house, which could be cut off if necessary from the body of the huge gray structure.

"Nobody is in the garden," she said, "nobody! The servants have all gone to the great hall to attend my uncle at supper. Jehan will meet me at the gate, if I whistle—he has done it before. Then a pause at Jehan's house, our horses, and away we go! A-ha, the Vicomte, with his grim, Huguenot face, will look more sour than ever. He thinks I am safe, because every door is locked and because I have welcomed him in this uncomfortable costume of state."

She drew the long train of her robe across her arm, threw the great fan she carried into a corner. It was in the latest fashion introduced by the Queen Catherine dei Medici, but she handled it as carelessly as the perfumed gloves she thrust in the rough leathern pouch which she had hung to her side.

"I hardly think that I shall need these dainty trifles," she said. "With Jehan, a good horse, my rosary, a box of Cadillac's salve, and this roll of gold, methinks I shall outwit that old hypocrite, my uncle. St. Margueret forgive me—but how I hate the sad ways of these Huguenots!—and among our orange flowers

and jasmine they seem more out of place than——"

She paused and measured again the distance to the terrace.

"Now or never!" she murmured, closing her lips tightly. "There is a knock at the door!"

She picked up the fan and a slight poniard that lay near the flowers and threw them behind the arras, which was of brown color, embroidered with great medallions of the flight into Egypt, between each of which appeared the arms of the De Florents quartered with those of the great families with which they had married. The figures of the Blessed Virgin and the Child caught her eye.

"O Mother!" she whispered, a serious look transforming her face. "Pray for me!—thou knowest what it was to flee from persecution!" The smile came back again. "How can I compare my flight with that of the Holy Family?" she said. "I merely fly to warn Donnet to come another day, lest there be a scene between him and this fierce uncle of mine——"

The knocking at the door grew louder. Mar-

guerite de Florent leaned over the rail and drew from among the foliage a ladder made of twisted rope, colored green, and hardly distinguishable from the leaves about it. It had been made in sport by Marguerite and her brother, Gaston, to carry on some of the childish escapades for which they had been noted all through Arles before their father, the old Vidame de Florent, died. These had ceased in the Château de Florent since then for various reasons.

"In the name of Heaven, Mademoiselle, let me in!" called a shrill voice. "In the name of Heaven!"

"What! Nanon!" Marguerite said, aloud. "What can you want? I thought that you were at the gate by this time!"

"And I was!" responded the voice: "I was quite at the gate when Providence sent me back, to look for the Book of Hours which I always love to borrow for you, and——" The young girl had withdrawn the bolt, and a middle-aged woman, with a benevolent face, which was not without shrewdness, entered hastily. She was plainly dressed in a brown

gown, and she dragged a heavy travelling cloak behind her.

"Oh, Mademoiselle," she said, "help me to get my words straight; I have something terrible to tell you. To think that the house of your dear father, the Vidame—he who was entirely devoted to the church and the dear Bishop, your uncle—should be filled with men of the religion, who hate even the crucifix!"

"But, Nanon," said her mistress, gravely, "why have you come to tell me this? You have said it a hundred times before at least. It wastes time; if I am to warn the Count, we should have been almost on our way ere this. 'Tis scarce an hour to sunset!"

"Warn him!" whispered Nanon, "it is too late!"

Marguerite smiled.

"Perhaps! Well, Nanon, if he arrive—or even if he has arrived—my uncle, the Chevalier—the Chevalier of the Calvinist Raw Head and Bloody Bones—can but make his visit unpleasant and perchance keep us apart for a day or two. There! What is that?"

Nanon had bolted the door; there was a

heavy tread in the corridor without. The serving-maid hid the cloak behind the arras, and adjusted Marguerite's train. Then she picked up a cluster of roses from the floor and mutely forced them into her mistress' hands. She hurriedly clasped a bracelet of antique shape upon the wrist of her mistress. It was of dull gold, in which a star-shaped green turquoise was set, surrounded by a circle of brilliants. It took her but a moment to station herself near the window, with the book of hours open before her.

"Is Madameselle Marguerite de Florent within?" demanded a harsh voice.

"The Chevalier!" said Marguerite. "Nanon, why this masquerade? Why am I to pretend to be wearing garlands? and this bracelet! It is not mine; and you who cannot read a line to be lost in my prayer book. Answer me, Nanon! are you mad?"

Something in the piteous look of her servant made her stop short. She and Nanon knew every inflection, almost every thought of each other; they had been together since Marguerite, a little orphan, had been put into the

arms of the good woman. And Marguerite knew that Nanon must have some good reason for her conduct.

She shook at her train until all the silver lace and pearls upon it glittered like gold in the red light of the sun, raised her head haughtily, and, with the great bunch of red roses in her hand, threw open the door and confronted her late mother's brother, the Chevalier d'Albert.

"Welcome, my uncle," she said. "I fancied that you were at meat, after your hasty journey from Paris. Were the capons ill done, or did Rougnon, the cook, fail to season the fish soup, which we of Provence so love?"

"No such trifles, niece," said the Chevalier, gruffly. The hair, which on Marguerite's head was a delicate auburn, with golden strands running through it, was on his a thick, bristly cap of dark red. His face, with its pointed beard, looked long and thin above a yellowish ruff, was made to seem longer and thinner by the fact that it was unshaven. He looked at his niece suspiciously from his oval brown eyes. Nanon, watching them, was struck by their

resemblance to each other ;—and yet Marguerite was beautiful and seemed to be the soul of honor and candor, while the Chevalier gave the impression of deceit and distrust ; he seemed, as Nanon said to herself, in her Provincial patois, "dark."

He looked at the cross on Nanon's book.

"Popery!" he muttered. "Popery everywhere!"

"Chevalier d'Albert," said Marguerite, in her clear, soft voice, "I choose not to understand your scowl or your mutterings. If I did, I should hold myself insulted in my own house —in that house, Monsieur, to which I late welcomed you. If I have not been present at supper, it is because there is no woman of my name here ; my uncle, the Bishop, has always counselled me to be as retired as possible, and it ill becomes a maiden to sit at a table surrounded by men-at-arms—and besides," added Marguerite, demurely, "it suits me little—me, the last of a Catholic house—to sit at table where my uncle and his men-at-arms eat flesh meat on the vigil of a Christian feast."

The Chevalier scowled.

"Hold, niece! You have had ever a habit of planting little daggers with a soft and gentle air. If you do not deport yourself with more seemly reverence, I will see that you are forced to eat flesh meat on the vigil of even a greater feast than the Assumption. There is coming a day —a day when France shall know these outworn mummeries no more."

"Enter," said Marguerite, keeping her stately head very high, "I will not pretend that your supper is not getting cold or that I love your presence just now. Since you Calvinists hate even the politeness which would lead me to assume a friendliness I do not feel, I am frank. It might have been otherwise, uncle," continued Marguerite, with a touch of feeling in her voice, "for it goes hard with me not to love the brother of my dear mother. But you threatened me a moment hence."

"I threaten no more," said the Chevalier, putting his hand on the sword hilt that showed beneath his black velvet cloak. "I act. You will change the gala robe you have put on in mockery of my coming—you know I detest such

levities—and make ready to go to Paris with me."

"You mistake, uncle," said Marguerite, motioning the Chevalier to a chair, which he did not take. "I attired myself in this gown —which Nanon and I think becomes me well—," she added, with an undercurrent of mischief in her soft voice, "because it was the best I have, and that might please—not you, Monsieur de Chevalier," she said, with a low courtesy, "but my Betrothed, the Count Donnet O'Neil, of whom you said so many pleasant things a moment ago."

"An adventurer, an Irish adventurer!" said the Chevalier.

"A good Catholic and a true gentleman!" answered Marguerite, with a lower courtesy.

"A beggar!"

"With a good name, spotless hand, and a reputation gained in defence of that faith from which you have —— seceded. Betrothed he was to me with the consent of my father and of my other uncle, the Bishop of Arles ——"

"Who is in Rome with the Cardinal of Lorraine and who does not know that the lands

Marguerite walked towards the window, trilling the quaint old air, with no purpose, it must be admitted, except to exasperate her uncle. Nanon stood like a statue of despair. "Ah, these red-headed ones!" she thought, "what tempers they have!"

The Chevalier kicked the book of hours so savagely that it bounded from the window; Marguerite did not seem to notice this, though she felt her face flush.

"Ah, fleur de la rose!" she trilled. "Did you speak, uncle? I think you said I was to go away? Yes, in time, when my uncle, the Bishop, returns, I shall go as the bride of the man of whom he approves," and she continued her song—

"Ah, fleur de la rose,
Si douce, si gaie,
Fleur du Mai—
Fleur du Mai!"

Nanon whispered—

"Go with him, go!"

Marguerite turned to her uncle, with one of those womanly flashes of intuition, she said to him in her softest voice:

"The Count O'Neil is here!"

"I decline to answer, Mademoiselle."

"Have you dared to molest him?"

The Chevalier laughed.

"Love is a magician," he said, closing the casement, "it hears the voice of the beloved everywhere; it creates that voice. Your Count may come when he will; but you, his dove, his treasure, will be on the way to Paris. Your maid may stay here; I will provide you with another from the town."

Nanon rushed to her mistress and threw her arms about her.

"Go, go!" she whispered. "Ask no questions. Go!—trust me! If you should be —*detained*, do not hide the bracelet." "Ah, Monsieur le Chevalier," she sobbed, "you will not separate me from my little one—my baby—my mignonne!"

"She will be safe," answered the Chevalier, briefly.

"And how shall I stay alone, with these rude soldiers in the castle?"

"They will go with me," said the Chevalier. "You can stay here until I or another bring

back your precious mistress. No time must be lost."

Marguerite, not understanding, full of strange fears, fully trusted Nanon. She had since her infancy been accustomed to rely upon herself; she had been taught to fear nothing but the unseen; she had been as another boy beside her brother Gaston; she would gladly have defied her uncle. A man who despised the cross, who insulted it in her very presence, deserved no reverence from her. But the strange cry; the appeal in Nanon's eyes—her frenzied words—all these made Marguerite docile.

"Chevalier," she said, with another mocking courtesy, "if you will permit me to go to my chamber, I will attire myself for travelling. Nanon!"

"Stand back!" said the Chevalier to Nanon. "For once my niece must do without a tire-woman."

Marguerite was beside herself with anger. She was accustomed to command—she, the spoiled lady of the Castle of the Roses, most proud of all the De Florent women! A childish impulse to defy her uncle in some way, without

denying the appeal of Nanon's eyes, took possession of her. She trilled loudly, in her beautiful voice, as she left the room :

"Ah, blossom of the roses,
So sweet, so gay,
O bloom of May,
O bloom of May,
When your gold heart uncloses,
Life is so sweet,
And time so fleet,
Rose—rose of Marguerite!"

As if in reply came from below, a piercing cry. It seemed to Nanon, who heard it—Marguerite did not, for she was in the corridor—like a blinding flash of white light through darkness, blinding the eyes. It uttered twice, "Marguerite! Marguerite!"

The Chevalier cast a quick glance at Nanon ; he saw by her face that she had heard it.

"You will stay here, my girl," he said, grimly.

Nanon heard the key turn in the lock ; she was a prisoner.

However, this did not give her a deep pang ; she knew well that the rope ladder hung without the casement. She knew it too well.

When Marguerite and Gaston—God rest his soul!—were little children, this rope ladder had been made for them by Jehan, who was always too indulgent. It had helped them to play at many games, invented from the old romances with which he filled their hearts. Sometimes Gaston would be Leander and swim the Hellespont, to mount to Marguerite's balcony. At another time he was Theseus rescuing a fair Greek maiden from the Minotaur. The children had a way of hiding the ladder, so that Nanon could not prevent them from wandering about the terrace on the lovely Provençal nights. And Nanon did not much blame them in her heart for longing for these glimpses of freedom, for the castle was gloomy and dark, and this house with the loggia had been built for the children's play-room by orders of their uncle, the Bishop, who had a deep tenderness for the orphan children. And at that time the country around Arles was quiet. Their nearest neighbor was the Señora Gloria de Muñoz and half a dozen other surnames of grandeur, who was the widow of a Spanish grandee. She had been a De Serrant, from another province,

but she preferred her castle in Provence to all other places, so she had condemned the great Don Sebastian Christopher Maria de Muñoz of Severicha to stay in a country he preferred less than his native Seville. The Don was very big and tall and stately, and she very little and imperious ; so she had had her way.

The childhood of the De Florents had been as happy as that of any children, left without a mother, could be. It was known that their uncle, the Chevalier, who had very noble blood in his veins, his cousin, four times removed, being the Queen of Navarre, was a Huguenot, and that he was one of the guardians of these children. This fact made the children objects of pity to the country people around them. A Huguenot—a Calvinist—a man of "the religion" meant to these good people much the same as "anarchist" means to us.

"O ciel!" Nanon had often said. "They say they are Christians—these Huguenots—but they are not. They break the Christ (the crucifix) whenever they see it ; they hate the holy pictures—they are of a horrible gloom!"

It was understood that Gaston should go to

his uncle D'Albert at the age of eighteen and that the D'Alberts were trying to make a match for Marguerite with an Englishman of the Huguenot opinions; consequently, neither the Bishop of Arles, who, at this time, the August of 1572, was in Rome with the Cardinal of Lorraine, nor the chaplain of the Château de Florent had spared any pains in the religious education of the children.

Gaston was gone, cut off in the flower of his youth; they would write "fuit" after his name in the great book of the De Florent pedigrees. And half Provence was waiting with anxiety for the result of the battle which was to take place between Monseigneur de Florent and the Chevalier d'Albert. The Huguenot party had more power in France than King Charles. The Queen Mother, a politician at heart, caring for no religion, would side with the party that guaranteed her position. The battle would probably go against the Bishop and Marguerite become the wife of the Englishman and the mother of gloomy little Huguenot children in that country of heretics, England! It made Nanon cry to think of it.

But one day Marguerite at one of the feasts of the troubadours, held at Avignon, saw the Count Donnet O'Neil in the train of her uncle, the Bishop. As she passed from the church, after the grand Mass, which has preceded the tournament of the poets, a bright-faced young man had bowed low, offering her holy water.

"I was so frightened!" she said to Doña Gloria, as they entered the tribune of the hall.

"It is a good sign. I was frightened when I first met Don Sebastian," said Doña Gloria, laughing.

"Ah, what blue eyes he has. It is the blue of the Irish!" said Marguerite. "And how devoutly he crossed himself! I would I knew his name!"

Doña Gloria smiled though her great fan, embroidered with huge flaming oleanders, hid her face. She felt that Marguerite would soon know, for she had observed that the good Bishop, in the opposite tribune, was in close conversation with the dark-haired and blue-eyed young Irishman. And she was glad—this

might perhaps save her little Marguerite from the cold English heretic—besides, the Count Donnet was handsome, and, they said, a poet. And, more than all, the Doña Gloria, like all the best of her sex, loved an affair of the heart. She resolved that the Chevalier d'Albert should get the worst of the battle, if a woman's wit could bring that about.

On the day in August, when the Chevalier had suddenly come to the Château and demanded that he should see the Châtelaine, his niece, at once, Doña Gloria had already promised to come from her house to receive the Count Donnet, as he had announced his intention of stopping on his way from Avignon to Paris. She was delighted to chaperon Marguerite—and by this time the young people had become affianced.

She had not come. The Chevalier had demanded what guests his niece expected.

"My betrothed," she had answered, "the Count Donnet, and Doña Gloria de Muñoz."

The Chevalier had grown darker at this.

"Let him come," he said, "let him come!"

Marguerite was not afraid, but she resolved

that Donnet must be warned. She wasted no words; she had made the usual low courtesy and left the room.

"I cannot be expected to meet your men-at-arms an hour after sundown. A repast will be laid in the court of the orange trees for the Doña Gloria de Muñoz, the Count O'Neil—and you, my uncle, will be bidden to it when Doña Gloria comes."

The Doña Gloria had not come, the Count Donnet had not been warned, Nanon was a prisoner, and the Châtelaine of the roses stood in her little room, folding up the satin robe, which, an hour ago, she had donned for the eyes of the man she loved. Where was he?

II.

THE CONSPIRATORS.

"Is everything ready?" the Chevalier d'Albert asked, as he descended into the court-yard. "We must be out of this as soon as possible,—the neighbors are not by any means friendly—enemies are everywhere, Raoul. We must get the girl to Paris. Is everything ready?"

"Yes, Chevalier!" answered a man with a grizzly beard, "even to the new-fashioned planchette. *Tonnerre!*—your young lady will travel comfortably, though the journey be a hasty one."

Raoul wore a buff suit of leather; he was rugged and robust, though evidently past fifty; his breastplate was well polished, and he had the military air in perfection. His skin was so tanned and the hair of his beard so

grizzled that his eyes, bright and hard, seemed to be the only human attribute in his face.

"Why do you bother about the girl, Chevalier?" asked Raoul, impatiently. "She's your niece, of course, and you take an interest in her. But when there is good work to be done in Paris and many manors to be had for the asking in the next few days, I think we'd better be on the spot."

The Chevalier frowned. "Raoul, your business is with the soldiers and the horses. When I need counsel—" he changed his tone abruptly at the look that came into the man's eyes. "Is a soul nothing, Raoul? If I marry my niece to Sir Harry Sidney, I save her from her Papistical mummeries—I send her into England, a country of good Protestants—or better still into the new English colonies in America."

"*Ma foi!*" exclaimed Raoul, angrily. "You talk too much, Messire d'Albert. I am not fighting for souls, and you know that I care just as little for souls as the Queen Mother or Henry of Navarre or the Admiral Coligny cares for souls. It's a matter of manors and of power."

The Chevalier cast an angry glance at Raoul and looked around uneasily. They seemed safe enough from intrusion. They stood at the foot of the staircase; and the courtyard was empty, the retainers of D'Albert having not yet finished their bountiful Provençal supper. "I want to make things clear," continued Raoul, coolly. "In these days, he only is great who has power. I want power;—on condition that I attain power, I serve you, you know that. Suppose I should go to Catherine de' Medici or to King Charles ——"

The Chevalier put his right hand on his sword; and grasping Raoul's shoulder with his left dragged him under the staircase and forced him to stand against the wall of the castle half-hidden in the luxuriant and creeping vines that covered the gray stones.

"Is this a time, Monsieur de Cavigny, to talk thus?" he asked, digging his iron fingers into Raoul's shoulder. "I need every moment. You know what is brewing—you know," his voice was choked with rage.

"I know," said Raoul de Cavigny, shaking himself loose, "that I cannot trust you; you

have given half confidence to me. I know that danger threatens. I am not an intriguer but a soldier. I must know your plans at once, or I shall call off my men. I want power ; the Huguenots are on the point of becoming almighty in France; and yet, if the Queen Mother suspected ——"

D'Albert's eyes flamed.

"You can go then !"

"Adieu, Chevalier," said Raoul, coolly bowing his head. "My fifty men will go likewise. Whither?—that is my business. I have asked some simple questions at a time most inconvenient to you, because I could have no other chance of getting an answer."

D'Albert did not speak ; his face was contorted with rage. "I have my reasons," he said.

"Yes ;—religion, psalm singing, instead of the mass ! Bah ! don't I know your religion ; it is that of the English queen. 'Tis well known in England, where I have been, that Elizabeth keeps the crucifix in her room and that she is no more a Protestant than you or I. Henry of Navarre would become a Papist to-morrow, to be king of France."

"Silence, man!" cried D'Albert. "Darest thou insult me thus,—me who love the religion as my life?"

Raoul shrugged his shoulders.

"Who can hear us! Bah!—You start! 'Twas, nothing but a bird in the vine against the wall. Be honest! Why this waste of time? The Huguenots, with the help of England, will get rid of Charles and the Queen Mother. The Guises are already doomed!"

"By the living saints, Raoul, be silent!" cries the Chevalier, "or I'll cut your cursed tongue out!"

"Bah!" said Raoul, coolly. "What a sweet Protestant oath you have sworn! Methought we of the religion had no saints."

"Come, we'll take to the road!" cried the Chevalier, in an agony of fear. "Suppose you should be heard?"

By way of answer, the stalwart Raoul began to whistle a tune very popular at this time. Afterwards it was known as "Malbrook"; now as "He's a jolly good fellow"; it was a favorite air among the French soldiers; it chronicled the death of the Duke Guise le balafré. The

Chevalier caught him by the shoulders and tried to move him from his path. But Raoul was too solidly planted for that.

"Monsieur d'Albert, I must know what you are up to. I don't believe in your religion. Like me, you love power; like me, you want gold. You are a Huguenot because you love the abbeys, not because you love Calvin. I don't care what you do with the girl. I don't care what you've done with her brother ——"

"*Nom de ciel!*" muttered the Chevalier. "I ought to kill you!"

"And my fifty men?"

The Chevalier d'Albert had become as yellow as his ruff; he was helpless.

"*Soit!*" he muttered. "My niece is in the way!"

"A-ha!" said Raoul, with a twinkle in his eye.

"Her grandmother was an Irishwoman who had estates in England. Sir Henry Sidney wants to marry the owner of those estates. He has brought money and arms from Queen Elizabeth to help us raise the Bible above the crucifix."

"Of course, by all means," said Raoul, smiling. "We are pious."

"He agrees to help us—to help me particularly—to get what I want on condition that I marry Marguerite to him. He has divorced his wife ; they manage that easily in England, so the way is clear. Gaston is gone. The power of the prelates will be gone, too, and the Bishop of Arles cannot interfere. Those priests will fly or be drawn and quartered after the English fashion ; I would like to help to draw and quarter the Bishop of Arles myself. *My* way will be clear. The Admiral and his friends shall see that the Château of the Roses comes to me. That is all ; curse you !"

"And that is all? I shall take care of myself ; and then for ease and comfort in some abbey wrested from the monks !—or if we fail, a house among the red savages in those English colonies where so many brave Englishmen have gone. Come, but don't try to keep me in the dark again. But when are we to get rid of the girl ?"

"The moment we reach Paris. A devout minister of our religion will be in waiting.

The Châtelaine of the Roses will be made a good Protestant by that marriage," added D'Albert, grimly.

"Wait a moment!" said Raoul. "I have an idea. I'm to have an abbey, at least, for my share in the work. *Tonnerre de ciel!*—if the Queen Mother's astrologers could only tell her what is hanging over her head! But what's an abbey without a wife to keep all straight. And as we're carrying off one damsel, why not carry off two?"

"The waiting woman? Take her and be cursed! But hasten!"

"The waiting woman?" Raoul's eyes showed an ugly look. "The waiting woman! Is it likely that Raoul de Cavigny would carry off a waiting woman? Have a care, sirrah, my blood is better than yours, although you are cousin to her heretical queenship of Navarre!"

"You waste time!"

"To-day you know, we stopped at the house of the late Don Sebastian de Muñoz, and you told his widow that the Demoiselle de Florent was about to go to Avignon; you didn't want visitors to-night. Now the Doña Gloria is

after my own taste; a goddess, a Venus, a Hebe——"

"Heathenish and Papistical names," muttered D'Albert. "Her mother was a Spaniard; she's the devil of Popery."

"Don't talk that way," said Raoul. "Nobody's listening. She's a tulip, an oleander, a pomegranate. Let us take her, too, and I'll be married by the same goodly priest of Pope Calvin."

"Take her!—anything under Heaven to stop your infernal tongue!" cried D' Albert. "But that proud woman will die rather than marry a grizzled heretic!"

"We shall see!" retorted Raoul, knitting his eyebrows. "I have only to go to the Queen Mother with my little tale, and I can be the best Catholic in all the kingdom; she might make me a count, too."

The Chevalier broke away and ascended the steps.

"The hypocrite!" muttered Raoul. "Religion—bah! He tries to deceive even himself. I don't believe this new creed will ever make a saint like my dead wife; and I am sure

my little girl, wherever she is, is like her mother. Religion! Catherine uses it as a pawn, on the chess-board of France; she would go to the Protestant prayer rooms to-morrow, if the Calvinists could guarantee her monarchical power; and Coligny and the Béarnais and the Duke of Anjou—what do they care for religion? For me, all I want is a good living and a quiet life."

He plucked a long spray of large-leaved creeper with a flaming, star-shaped flower upon it, and flung it across his shoulders, and sang to his favorite air,

"See the bridegroom cometh, see the bridegroom cometh, see the bridegroom cometh,
So flower-bedecked and fair!
So flower-bedecked and rare,
A man with grizzled hair,
See the soldier cometh, see the soldier cometh, see the soldier cometh,
'Tis Raoul de Cavigny!"

III.

"CREDO ET SPERO."

BELOW, behind the screens of foliage, was Donnet O'Neil—prisoner. He had been seized on his way to the castle by order of the Chevalier and placed in a vault, under an oubliette, near the house of the loggia. He had struggled hard; and the stout soldiers had dragged him to the dungeon under the grand entrance. He had made his fight and raised his voice in vain. He had thrown himself in the corner of the damp cell in despair when he distinguished the rough tones of Raoul's voice. He listened, hoping that the Chevalier, whose tones he soon recognized, might give him some clue to the plot. He soon heard enough to interest him intensely. He gathered three things that made him long for liberty more fervently than he had ever longed for anything in his life.

The first of these things : Marguerite was to be married, against her will, to Sir Harry Sidney, of whom he had heard ; the second, that there was a plot against the king and his mother ; the third, that Doña Gloria was to be abducted by that ruffianly soldier of fortune, Raoul de Cavigny—a brigand, whose life made all virtuous men shudder.

And he, Donnet O'Neil, strong, skilful with sword and carabine, was a prisoner ! He had heard Raoul go away, singing jauntily. And as the last note of the lilted air died away, despair seemed to drop about him like the curtains of a bed of death.

He thought of Marguerite, so true, so sweet, so beautiful, in the hands of this hypocritical follower of the merciless Calvin. He almost wished that she were not so good a Catholic—for then she might kill herself rather than submit to be the slave of this Sir Harry Sidney, whose excesses of persecution in Ireland had justified the name " bloody " he had won. He was indeed a contrast to that other Sidney, Sir Philip, who was also in Paris.

" Yes," he said in his heart, " I would rather

have her die by her own hand than marry the English Turk;—and yet Holy Church would not sustain such Pagan suicide."

"If she were dead, I would be happy," sighed Donnet. "A thousand times better that she were dead. And poor Doña Maria Gloria!—if I could only save them both! Sir Harry will force her to England; she will be friendless. The egg-faced English queen will rebuke her wan looks. There will be no priest to console her in her misery;—but, there can be no marriage without consent! Let it be! I will tear her from him, for she is my betrothed, and no man can keep us asunder!"

Donnet had dropped his cloak. He stood under the ray of light. It came from the setting sun through the vine-covered window, about three feet above his head. His hair was dishevelled; he still clung to the long locks of the Irish nobility, for no edict of Queen Elizabeth could reach him here in France. His eyes, generally so frank and open, were narrowed in thought. He stood as still as a statue. There seemed no hope. Hard walls enclosed him; gratings of thick iron were above him;

no friend was near ; death waited for him ; his sword was gone, and he guessed that if the Huguenots were to rise, he could expect no mercy. No, the Chevalier d'Albert would not let the man who might trouble him or Sir Harry Sidney live—and to the adept the taking of life was so easy ! Those about the court had learned many secrets from the unholy Italian astrologers, whom Catherine de' Medici so loved.

There was no hope.

"A rat, poisoned in a trap!" thought Donnet. "A toad buried in a hole ! O God !"

He searched for his dagger ; they had taken that ; his rosary still hung within the pouch slung to his side. As he touched the beads, he thought with bitterness, that they were an omen of approaching death, for which he might as well prepare. When a soldier lost his sword, it was time for him to tell his beads, since then this world was naught to him.

In the dimness, his hand struck the heavily embroidered motto on the pouch. It was embossed in gold thread. Under his crest, the Red Hand, was the motto of his branch of the

O'Neils, "Credo et Spero." This brought him back from a world of distempered fantasy.

There was no need for him to urge himself to have faith; he believed with all his heart in the power of God to help him. But would God do it? Perhaps He designed that he should suffer death in this hole and that Marguerite should be lost to him for this world.

Donnet knew the English court. He had visited a relative attached to the train of Lord Surrey, who had a weakness for all things Irish. He fancied Marguerite, the lily flower, in that corrupt place, where the queen swore like a trooper, danced "disposedly" and the maids of honor drank great flagons of beer at breakfast. What a life for the Châtelaine of the Roses after the idyllic and sweet days of Provence. He imagined Marguerite in a damp, lonely manor, wearing away her life, while Sir Harry hung about the court as the lackey of his mistress, the queen.

Hope? How could he hope?—with four staunch walls about him and bars on the window which he could not reach! "Spero" seemed a mockery! And yet, he reflected, it

had never failed the O'Neils. He recalled that in time of his boyhood when hope seemed fled and yet was only obscured.

Oh, for his dagger! Not even a steel tooth-pick in his pouch. How he wished that he had been in the habit of carrying a metal tooth-pick, like that Duke of Guise, "the scarred," into whose mouth the Huguenot mob had thrust one in mockery even after his death. But there was nothing in his possession which he could use in prying open the door. He drew his cloak about him and threw himself on the pile of rushes in a corner of the cell. There must be some way out. Suddenly with one of those accesses of fury that take possession of a man of a sanguine temperament when he is beginning to despond, he arose and kicked the door of the cell with all his strength; it did not yield. He feverishly examined the lock; he perceived that the door was bolted on the outside. He exerted all his power in trying to force the door outward.

Darkness fell; he threw himself down on the rushes, disheartened, defeated, almost hopeless. But when had an O'Neil been hopeless?

He heard a sharp horn blast. He knew the signal; it was that of departure; he heard the tramp of horses, the Chevalier's command, and then the soldiers broke forth into one of Clement Marot's psalm tunes.

Marguerite was gone! He flung himself with all his force against that accursed door that stood between him and freedom. Again and again! Donnet O'Neil was a stalwart man, well versed in all the athletic exercises of his time. Was it fancy? Or did the bolt really move? He stood still, breathless. He heard the bolt shoot smoothly from its sheath.

"Silence," whispered a voice he knew, and Nanon stood before him. He could dimly discern her figure in the gloom. "Silence, Monsieur le Comte," she whispered, "speak no word; but follow me!"

She led the way through a long corridor; then down a flight of steps into a circular room, so cooled by the spring that ran through it, that Donnet drew his cloak more tightly around him. From this room by a circuitous passage, they emerged into the thicket of greenery beneath the house of the loggia.

"Mount!" Nanon said, "Ascend!"

He dimly made out the rope ladder. He seized that aid which Nanon held, and reached the loggia. He hesitated a moment before entering the window of the room. Who might be within?

"Haste!" Nanon whispered.

Like the good soldier he was, he obeyed; he pushed aside the heavy tapestry of the window and found himself in the room which the Châtelaine had lately occupied. A lamp hanging from the ceiling gave a dim light; the room was empty; his heart sank; he had hoped too much. The air was perfumed with the delicate scent from the roses she had dropped; he seized one —the lovely rose of Marguerite—and pressed it to his lips. He could not wait in idleness. He had heard enough of Nanon from Marguerite to know that she seldom acted hastily. What plan could she have conceived? What plan could be of any value while Marguerite was getting farther and farther from him?

Donnet's first impulse was the natural one of a soldier. He looked for a weapon. Once in possession of his sword, he would have felt

himself to be any man's equal. Without his sword he was helpless. He took the little silver lamp from its carved case, and, holding it above his head, parted the arras. There might be, he thought, an old lance, or, perhaps, even a rusty sword between the hangings at the wall. It was not unusual for trophies to be laid there. He searched carefully, but impatiently, yes!—there was her fan; he picked it up reverently; a warm breath of perfume seemed to come from the dainty toy; as he lifted it, a great rush of tenderness filled his heart—

"'Si douce, si gaie,'

Si douce est la Marguerite!" he murmured. He had heard her sing as they dragged him to the dungeon under the oubliette. And he had cried out for help. This was the strange sound that echoed her song. Now he was free and she was in bondage.

The light of the lamp fell on a glittering object, which lay near where the fan had fallen. He seized it with joy. It was the long slender poniard which Marguerite with a dim impression that she might need it, had thrown there.

He recognized it as one of the beautiful collection of weapons of which the De Florents were proud. It had been brought from Damascus by a Crusader, and it was always kept in a velvet case hung higher than the rest of the swords, lances, shields and spears in which the late Vidame had rejoiced. The Count O'Neil thrust it into the scabbard in which his own dagger had rested. He was armed now; he felt like a man again.

He laid the fan tenderly on the table; he did not dare to hold the fragile thing; he restored the lamp to its support which was suspended by silver chains from the ceiling. He could wait no longer; he was armed! He would make his way to the road, find Jehan—the steward of the De Florents—and, with a borrowed horse, make his way towards the house of Doña Gloria. He parted the drapery of the window; a draught of jessamine and rose-scented air swept into the room. He saw clusters of gardenia and stephanotis beneath him, silvered by the moonlight, and from everywhere came the buzz of insects. At intervals sounded the delicious notes of a bird that seemed like

the nightingale. Ah! could she be allowed to suffer on such a night as this? He dropped the curtains and raised his hands to Heaven. "O God!" he murmured, "save her!"

A scratch was heard at the door. Donnet knew this meant that some one familiar with the household was without. Catherine de' Medici, among other Italian customs, introduced the practice of scratching at the doors, instead of knocking. And the Châtelaine had laughingly borrowed the fashion.

Donnet hastily threw open the door. He laid his hand on his poniard, as he perceived the tall figure of a Huguenot soldier, carbine in hand.

"A guard, sirrah?" he said, haughtily, noticing the fellow's leather doublet. "By what right do you intrude into the demesne of the Châtelaine de Florent?"

"By the right of duty," said a rich round voice.

"Oh, Jehan!" said Donnet. "A good word from the king or a troop of musketeers would be less welcome than the sight of thee!"

"Softly, softly!" said Jehan. "Are you not

amazed that I have turned Huguenot? I can sing a psalm of Clement Marot's like the best of them," and he warbled sanctimoniously:

"Though life's a desert full of woe,
And strewn with men's dry bones,
Your desert, sinner, is below,
In hell we'll hear your moans;
But as for me, washed clean, am I—
Washed clean from trace of sin—
You'll sink to hell when you shall die,
I Heaven will enter in!"

"Softly!" repeated Donnet, amazed by Jehan's imitation of the Huguenots.

An answer came from below.

"All well, friend?"

"All well!" responded Jehan, leaning out the window. "Get thee to the kitchen; there thou wilt find of the white wine of the country. The woman Nanon hath it, awaiting thee. Go! The bird is gone. Why shouldst thou guard the cage? Go drink and sleep; let the Lord keep the castle."

"Thou sayst well, comrade; I go!"

The soldier below was heard making his way through the thick foliage.

"He is gone—Nanon will keep him safe.

The Chevalier left two. The other——" Jehan pointed to a large red blot on his sleeve.

"Blood!" Donnet said.

"It was necessary!" Jehan answered. "The varlet, had gone into the chapel, and had broken the alabaster angel at the foot of the crucifix. He approached the great statue of St. John menacingly when ;—it is over," added Jehan, gravely. "There was a fight. St. John knows 'twas a fair fight. He lies in the pond under the lily pads—the old carp will not fast to-night," he added, grimly. "These clothes were his. The robe may not make the monk; but, with me, the habit makes the Huguenot."

"Jehan," Donnet said, "do you know that the Chevalier has carried off the Châtelaine?"

"They are now on the road to Paris. And, by my faith, Count, I hate to tell thee; but by this time they are, as far as the ministry of a Huguenot pastor could make them, husband and wife!"

Donnet started.

"You are wrong, Jehan; when they reach Paris, the false priest will be in waiting——"

"I would for your sake that it were so.

Cauvin, a cousin of the Geneva prophet and sage, Calvin, joined the Chevalier hastily with Sir Harry Sidney at the cross-roads. There's some bloody work in progress. It was arranged—Nanon had it from Doña Gloria that the marriage ceremony was to be performed at her house to-night."

"Jehan, we must save her——" Donnet almost involuntarily drew the slender poniard from its sheath.

"Ha-ha!" murmured Jehan, gazing curiously at the weapon. "A scratch from that would finish Sir Harry Sidney! 'Tis the poisoned poniard of the Vidame."

"Oh, that she had it!" groaned Donnet. "Oh, that Marguerite had thrust it through her heart rather than she should be the polluted bride of Sidney!"

"It is done now," said Jehan, coolly. "Bah! We can save her still. She has not consented. You may well believe that a forced marriage is no marriage at all. So strong are the Huguenots that the legal ceremony of their marriage is recognized in France—but we will save her, and she shall be your wife yet!"

Hope seemed to have deserted Donnet. "I would that she had died by her own hand!"

"A truly Christian wish!" said Jehan. "I fear the romances have turned your head. Rouse up. We will follow Sir Harry Sidney and his unwilling bride to Paris."

"His wife, once in England—and she is lost to me—lost, Jehan!"—his hard, dry tones shocked the steward. "It would be better we were both dead than that this should happen. By Heaven! she is mine!—betrothed to me in the presence of the Bishop of Arles—the devil, seas, kings——"

"Beware, Messire!" said Jehan, looking anxious.

"Kings themselves shall not part us!"

IV.

THE TURQUOISE BRACELET.

THE Doña Gloria had not been idle. Half a league from her castle was that of the Sieur de Beaujeancy. And the Sieur de Beaujeancy, who was somewhat over fifty and a widower, had sent many times to Doña Gloria gifts of flowers and game, with pleasant messages. But Doña Gloria had smiled on him only once,—and this was during a grand function at Arles when he had almost slapped the face of the Chevalier d'Albert, who dared to push aside the bearer of a processional crucifix, in order to cross the square with his men-at-arms.

A strange thing had happened on the afternoon of the Vigil of Assumption, just as Doña Gloria and her train were about to set forth for the Château of the Roses. A woman accompanied by one servant had come to the castle and, in the deepest woe, had told of the plot against the Demoiselle de Florent, accompany-

ing her story with such strange circumstance that Doña Gloria said to herself many times, the day of romance had come again. Moreover, this woman had been a schoolmate of the Doña Gloria in her youth.

After this she could do only one thing,—appeal to the Sieur de Beaujeancy. It was not altogether agreeable, such an appeal might lead him to hope too much. Nevertheless, it must be made. But first she sent off her trustiest valet to Nanon, with a certain bracelet, antiquely carved, containing a green turquoise, surrounded by brilliants which the stranger had brought. The she despatched a note to the Sieur de Beaujeancy, who, though he could not read, kept a very learned chaplain. Promptly an answer came back, by word of mouth, brought by a young page who carried before him on his mule, a great basket of pomegranates and figs.

"Madame," said the page, looking up at Doña Gloria from under the great love-locks that hung on both sides of his head, "the Lord of Beaujeancy says that he is yours to the death."

"He is more than kind," answered Doña Gloria, smiling at the veiled woman who sat beside her. "But will he disperse the troops of M. D'Albert, and bring the Châtelaine to me."

"He promises you his life; and he lays these sweet gifts at your feet," said the page, in a pompous tone. "If he die in the attempt,—since there are with the Chevalier the mercenary, Raoul de Cavigny, and a Milord Sidney, he begs that you will——"

"Eat his pomegranates!" said Doña Gloria, with a coquettish motion of her fan.

"No,—that you will not forget him!"

"I will remember him—after my dear Don Sebastian," answered Doña Gloria. "Oh, these men!" she added, when the page had gone. "These men! They think that we women have no hearts;—the Sieur de Beaujeancy actually expects me to forget my own Don Sebastian." And Doña Gloria sighed.

The woman on the divan next to her sighed, too; but there was no soft sparkle of gayety in her eyes; she raised her veil. Her face was young, beautiful, but unutterably sad.

"Ah, Doña Gloria," she said, "you were made for happiness."

The fountain in the courtyard sparkled and its spray misted the fruit and flowers on the orange trees.

"No," said Doña Gloria, "not more than you. But I am different. You were always different. At the convent, you were different, —so serious, so intense. For me, I am quick-witted enough not to love too much. I loved Don Sebastian,—but not too much. And he whom you loved better than life has tried to kill you,—your husband!"

The woman shuddered.

"Yes; I have found refuge here."

Doña Gloria put her arms about her school-fellow.

"Poor mignonne!" she said. "Forget!"

"Forget! Ah, Gloria, when I know that he whom I love would, if we were to meet face to face, send me to death. Forget? God may make me forget by giving me madness! It would be better! And yet, when my husband and I met first in Paris, he adored me.—Yes, he adored me!"

"He must have forsaken God, to have turned aside from you ——"

"He believed in no God."

"There can be no sacrament," said Doña Gloria, reverently, "without Christ. Forget him! Your father, Raoul de Cavigny, has returned from the service of the Princess of Clèves; he will protect you."

"He cannot give me back my husband's heart!"

Doña Gloria's tears fell fast; she seldom wept; but now she covered her face with her hands and cried like a child; the other woman remained tearless.

Marguerite de Florent rode silently beside her uncle. She answered him in monosyllables. Sir Henry Sidney and Cauvin were in front. At some distance behind them, Raoul and his captain, Brevette, came. They, too, were silent. Raoul was filled with silent hatred for both his masters; Brevette did not dare to speak first. The men-at-arms followed their respective leaders,—Raoul's preceding the Chevalier, who rode last.

"My niece," D'Albert said, "since you will

not speak to me, I will relieve you of my company. M. Raoul de Cavigny," he called out, "will you guard this lady?"

"M. D'Albert," responded Raoul, furiously. "I am no jailer. Since your presence annoys the Demoiselle de Florent, I will offer myself as a better substitute."

The Chevalier made no answer, but joined Sir Henry and Cauvin.

"Demoiselle," Raoul said, moved by a sudden unusual impulse, "you are free; I am no jailer. If you were to go at this moment, I should not try to prevent you,—though I should have to fight for my life. My men are not all with me; they had other work. They are miles beyond the Roses. If it were not so, I swear that you should be free!"

"I ask not to be free, monsieur," Marguerite answered, somewhat haughtily.

The moon had risen in full splendor, and the low-walled castle of Doña Gloria was now visible in the white plain about it. In front, high up, there hung above the Moorish portal, a great lantern enclosed in a frame of wrought iron.

"Monsieur," Marguerite spoke softly, "I am in deep distress. One whom I love is in prison, in my own Château. I am about to make a bold, almost audacious request——"

Raoul's eye fell upon the bracelet.

"Pardon, Mademoselle," he whispered, "that bracelet——"

"'Tis a token,—a green turquoise——"

"I know, I know," he said quickly. "There is only one; I had it from the dowager Princess of Clèves. I saved her life. I gave it to my wife, now dead, and then to the little girl I left with the nuns. From whom came it to you?"

"I know not;—but it came as a token of good-will."

Raoul did not doubt her.

"Your request?"

"That I may go to the Doña Gloria, whose house is near. I will tell her what has befallen me. Then I will return."

Raoul's lips twitched; he would show these brutes of Huguenots that he did not fear them!

"Your word," he said.

"The lips of a De Florent never lie! I will return!"

"Go, Demoiselle," he said, with a low bow.

Marguerite spoke quickly to her horse. Before either the Chevalier or Sir Harry Sidney knew what had happened, she had reached the circle of light in front of the castle. There were watchers ready; for the portal opened, and she was lost to sight.

From behind the castle suddenly rose a group of horses, men and spears. They made for the men-at-arms.

"'Tis that demon of a Beaujeancy," cried Sir Harry. "We must fight, Cavigny. Where is the Châtelaine?"

"Gone," said Raoul, with a sneer. "She gave me her word to return."

Sir Harry shivered, as one suddenly struck with cold; he was wild with anger.

"Cauvin, Brevette," he said, "make a feint to the right." He called out twenty names rapidly. "To the right. All of you! Let De Beaujeancy follow you. When you reach the high ground make a stand."

The men were off like a flash;—only Cauvin lingered.

Without warning, Sir Harry dealt Raoul a

sudden blow with his fist that sent him to the ground. At a signal both the Chevalier and Sir Harry were upon him; and, in spite of his struggles, he was bound hand and foot.

"You are about to murder me," he said, as blood ran from his cut lips. "Be it so,—I trust the girl will be kept from returning. And now, Monsieur Cauvin, you were once a priest; you are one, you say, you will please hear my confession, and help me to die."

Sir Harry laughed; Cauvin responded by kicking Raoul in the mouth. The shouts of battle sounded on the high ground. Cauvin rode off.

"Let them fight," said Sir Harry. "We'll force that girl to go with us."

"She will keep her word. This is needless," said the Chevalier, dryly. "The lips of a De Florent never lie. If we kill Cavigny, Brevette and his men will avenge him."

"Come," we'll take the chances. Sir Harry, and the Chevalier dragged Raoul to the white illuminated gate of the castle.

It was evident, from the sounds that came from the high ground, that the Sieur de Beau-

jeancy was making the Huguenots and their colleagues feel some stout blows. Suddenly a flying figure pushed against Sir Harry, who at once recognized the Geneva pastor.

"Cauvin!"

"Yes, Cauvin—escaped barely with his life. The idolatrous Papists under that man of Beelzebub, the Sieur de Beaujeancy, and in league with a furious Irishman, are cutting their way through your men. I lost my horse and my sword and made my way thither. For the safety of our undertaking, hasten forward at once—you have not half an hour to lose!"

He spoke quickly in a dry, staccato voice. The moon, again flooding the scene with the almost dazzling night-splendor of Provence, revealed him as a short, thick-set man in a steel corselet and a wadded doublet. There seemed to be little of the manner of the Geneva preacher about him.

D'Albert pulled at his sword hilt nervously, and began to speak:

"We waste time," Sir Harry Sidney said; "help me with Cavigny."

Raoul was lifted and laid near the glittering

door of the house. Sir Harry drew his sword and put the blade against his throat. D'Albert struck thrice with his heavy boot at the door. The wicket opened and the voice of a woman said:

"By what right, Chevalier D'Albert, do you invade the demesne of a defenceless woman at this hour?"

The face of Doña Gloria, half hidden by her mantilla, was visible through the aperture.

"I am Sir Harry Sidney, madame. The Chevalier D'Albert demands his ward, the Demoiselle de Florent."

"The Doña Gloria de Muñoz refuses to give her up."

"A proud answer; and if I had time I should teach her to regret by bringing her toy house well about her ears," broke out D'Albert. "We must to Paris. My niece gave her parole to our comrade, Sieur de Cavigny. Here he is, awaiting death as a hostage for the keeping of the ward of a De Florent,—whose tongue never lies," he added with sarcasm.

"Speak, Cavigny!" whispered Sir Harry

Sidney, pressing the cold steel against Raoul's throat.

"The Demoiselle de Florent can keep her word or not," said Raoul, in a clear voice. "But this is true; Monsieur Sidney—heaven curse him for an English brute!—will let my life-blood out the next minute unless she does keep it. If the Demoiselle keep it not, I care not," his voice was not steady as he said it; "but before I die, I pray that she will tell me whence she obtained the golden bracelet I saw a little time ago upon her wrist."

There sounded in reply something like a shriek; and after a silence, Dona Gloria was heard to expostulate. Then she cried out, as if in desperation:

"Madre de Dios!—but if you go, you will go to your death; you may save him but 'twill mean death to you. St. Anthony help!"

"Hear'st thou the idolatry of those vile saint-worshippers?" D'Albert asked, scowling. "The time is at hand, the acceptable time when few will be left in France. I thirst as the hart for our day of deliverance and salvation. It will come; it will come!"

Sir Harry Sidney gave him a glance of impatience.

"Fools!" he whispered. "why am I in this dilemma, but by the silliness of you, D'Albert; of you, Cavigny! We must be in Paris as soon as possible. The admiral is better; the plan is working well."

"My fortune depends on my marriage with this girl, and she, D'Albert, is the price of my help to you. I swear to hold you responsible if she does not keep her word."

"The cause! The cause!" said Cauvin. "Think you not of the great cause!"

"The devil take the cause. The Queen of England has her plans; I have my plans; it suits us to join your cause because your Huguenot religion helps to destroy things of government in France. Our English Protestantism is different! The cause!" repeated Sir Harry Sidney, with contempt. "If I kill, it is for the sake of better fortune. You Huguenots are ready to flood all Paris with blood in the name of a religion of peace! Bid them within make haste for your sake, Cavigny!"

Raoul raised his voice :

"I await the decision of the Demoiselle de Florent," he said hoarsely.

"The idolaters must die!" said Cauvin. "Yes, if necessary the king. Were not kings given to people as a punishment? They were hard of heart and the kings came: Oh ye of little faith! Did Jephthah flinch? Or Abraham? We must slay and spare not?"

Sir Harry replaced his sword and took his dagger from its sheath. He went again to the tracery of the door and struck his weapon three times against the sounding steel.

"The time is past; or almost past. I swear, Mademoiselle de Florent, that unless you appear, my dagger shall drink the blood of your hostage; Sieur de Cavigny! Speak or come! I will fling his body against this gate if you refuse!".

Raoul groaned; he was desperate.

"Demoiselle," he cried out in a voice as shrill as that of a woman in pain, "You gave your word!"

The gates of silvered steel opened, a slight figure wrapped in the long riding-cloak appeared, the gates closed again. The figure

turned and waved an adieu to a face at the wicket. On the wrist Raoul saw the gleaming band of gold.

"I thank you, Demoiselle," he said, "you have saved my life!"

She did not speak.

D'Albert seized her roughly and lifted her to her horse.

Sir Harry cut the cords that bound Raoul, who, in ominous silence, mounted his steed. Cauvin took D'Albert's second horse. Several papers fell from the folds of his cloak. Raoul caught them, but did not return them.

"Crow! Vulture!" he muttered. "Thou pretendest to be a priest—thou who dare not offer a sacrament to the dying!"

Like dark spectres in a world of misty silver light, the four rode away.

A half-hour later the Sieur de Beaujeancy and Donnet O'Neil reached the plateau in front of the castle of Doña Gloria. De Cavigny had hastily scrawled a message for his lieutenant and thrown the leaf in the middle of the road with a large stone upon it. It caught Donnet's eye; he picked it up and read:

"To Paris. We take the Demoiselle de Florent thither."

Donnet dashed off towards the main road, with Sieur de Beaujeancy following him. Neither saw the wicket open or heard the Doña Gloria calling them to stop.

"Cavigny," said Sir Harry Sidney, when they had ridden a few miles through a series of narrow byways, "here is a purse of one hundred louis, we are quits."

De Cavigny took the money with a growl.

"It may serve for many things," he said to himself, with an ominous frown. Raoul de Cavigny rode moodily beside the pasteur Cauvin. He was not pleased with himself; he acknowledged bitterly that he was a hired man—that he deserved no consideration either from D'Albert or Sidney. His relations with them had been purely businesslike. He had gathered a band of resolutes, each member served him for money or plunder; he sold their services to the highest bidder, and at this time D'Albert happened to be the highest bidder.

The vision of death had shocked the soldier

of fortune into thought. He had faith, as a gambler may have faith, as a thoughtless man of action has faith. He believed in a future life, but it had always seemed to him as if he should have a little space before death to tie up the loose ends of his life. His wife had said to him when her end was near:

"Ah, Raoul, the little one here will lead you to the good God."

And he had laughed, saying that while he had a clear field and a good sword, he had not much need of her good God. Still, he always believed her in his heart. And the little one! Where was the little one?

For the first time in many years Raoul had a sense of degradation; and this aggravated the intense anger he felt against the men that had bought him. He realized for the first time that in their eyes he was a mere thing. He no longer thought of the Doña Gloria. He looked at the sanctimonious face of Cauvin, who was softly singing a hymn written by Clement Marot, and longed to plunge his dagger deep into his heart. "Fine priests—these Huguenots have," he said to himself; "priests that led a

soldier to death, and then did not know how to give him absolution!"

Raoul's men had gone, too. Whither he knew not; and he, the terror of many battles, owed his life to the truth of a girl who had sacrificed all to keep her word. And the band of gold—that studded circlet of gold the Princess of Cleves had given to him, and which belonged to the little one he had lost long ago! Where had she got it? The drawling accent of Cauvin almost maddened him.

"I must speak to the Demoiselle," he thought. "At least, though she thinks I am a coward, she shall know that I am not quite a brute."

Sir Harry Sidney and D'Albert rode behind the lady, who occupied the centre of the square made by the four cavaliers.

Raoul fell back.

"Demoiselle," he said, "I thank you again."

"The mouth of a family of honor never lies."

"May I ask Mdlle. de Florent where she obtained that bracelet?"

"It belongs to one who loved you, M. de Cavigny."

"Me! loved me?" Raoul started. Then he

said roughly, "I have been loved but little in my time."

"It was sent," said the voice from under the veil, "to a poor girl in the hands of a faithless relative, by your daughter, that you might perhaps be merciful. It was brought to this poor girl by her maid Nanon. Let me give you another message from one who loves you. Flee at once. Join your men-at-arms, and leave these evil creatures."

"And you?"

The lady sighed. "Leave me to God:—He only can help me!"

Raoul did not answer. His daughter? The blood coursed through his veins as if he had been drinking too much of his favorite wine of Burgundy. His daughter!

"Cavigny," said Sir Harry Sidney, "I want to speak to you."

"I am a cur, and he calls me!" muttered Raoul. "M. Sidney!" he said aloud.

"Your men have not returned. Brevette and they have doubtless taken another route."

"Doubtless!" said Raoul, indifferently.

"Shall we go to Paris without them, sir?" demanded Sir Harry peremptorily.

"As they are not here, I presume we have no other resource."

"Keep close to the Chevalier. I will ride with the Demoiselle de Florent," said Sir Harry, with the accent of insolence.

"If," said Raoul, irritated and reckless, "if, mademoiselle, you grow tired of your escort, tell me, and I will know how to relieve you."

Sir Harry laughed. "The grizzle-bearded grows insolent and gallant."

"No," said D'Albert, "I will ride by my niece, Sir Harry. You are freer in your manners in England, but we of France allow no private conversations between fiancés until after the nuptial ceremony."

Sir Harry rode in front beside Raoul. The Chevalier in vain strove to entice his niece into conversation; she did not deign by word or sign to show that she knew of his existence.

"They are free enough at your court in these days, Chevalier," said Sir Harry, with another laugh. "Mme. Catherine, is not so circum-

spect as the monks would have her be. They say in England-——"

"Tush, Sir Harry," said D'Albert sternly, "no tales of that kind within earshot of the demoiselle, my niece. Thou had'st better sing goodly hymns with pious friend Cauvin."

"No, no," said Sir Harry, "I could never catch the drawl. There be those in England who sing in that manner; but, thanks to all the gods! good Queen Bess and Lord Cecil will soon cut their throats when she is done with the Papists."

"She may turn Papist herself yet," retorted Cauvin bitterly. "'Tis plain she loves us of the religion, the elect of God, who judge merely earthly princes, only that she may use us!"

"Why should she love you? And, by the gods! if she went over to the Papists, we English would follow her. For we know that she would not go to Rome unless she could make herself Pope!" And Sir Harry chuckled. "Why should she love you! You would overthrow kings—Elizabeth, Catherine, Charles, the Emperor—and rule yourselves. Cauvin or Calvin as you call him, would come from

Geneva, to preside over the Parliament. 'Tis not for the sake of Catholicism that Catherine de' Medici hates you, nor for the sake of psalm-singing that Elizabeth helps you. You fight the monarchy in France, you fight the government. Why, there came to court a poor folk out of Suffolk—a demented squire—who met the Queen on her way to her barge, with a great device painted on a banner ; 'twas Satan in green and red. And Queen Bess, who is generous to the harmless, asked, smiling, why he bore it. 'I am the staunchest Protestant in Suffolk,' he said, 'where there are so many Papists—and I bear as my device the first Protestant who dared to tell St. Michael his mind !' The Queen laughed. Then she frowned and seemed thoughtful.

" 'It may be,' she said, 'that these dissenters will yet throw us from our kingly throne, as we have thrown down the Virgin from her place.' Some of us trembled. Not I ! If I were here in France, I would be for monarchy and law. But fancy not, Cauvin, that our Queen loves such as you. In France you may make mischief, but in our tight little island, beware !"

And he drew his hand in what he considered an exquisitely humorous way across Cauvin's throat.

Cauvin did not answer, but his eyes flashed under his overhanging brows. He muttered between his teeth :

"Va chassez l'idole !"

"Ha !" retorted Sir Harry, with another disagreeable laugh, "I know your countersign —chassez l'idole ! 'Tis an anagram from the name of Charles of Valois ! Go, overthrow the idol ! You mean the Catholic Church and the Pope ? And all government that does not accept your tenets ? "

"I will say yea," answered Cauvin, giving his companions a quick, defiant glance. "I,— though I knew not the secret thoughts of my kinsman at Geneva,—would say, down with all governments that accept the Pope as the head of all Christendom. And, more—down with all governments that attempt to rule without the light vouchsafed to us believers ! "

"I thought so ! " Sir Harry laughed again. "You are of the class that would tear down without building up. Do you know why

Catherine de' Medici fears you? 'Tis for the same reason that our Virgin Queen toys with you as a cat toys with a mouse. Do not mutter, Master Cauvin—I am but frank. . When you pretend that each man shall interpret Scripture, you leave each man free to choose his own government, to exclaim against the central power and refuse to obey it. This Papistical church I do not love,—albeit," he added with another laugh, "I am about to wed a Papist—thanks to the easy way of getting rid of our wives you of the New Light have taught us,—yet it saith, 'give Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's,' 'fight for your own king and you own country!' Queen Elizabeth has freed herself from the Pope, whom some of us pretend (that we may throw dust in the eyes of the people) to have been a despot, but, after her strong hand is gone!—who knows? And the astrologers of Queen Catherine, they say, have converse with the devil."

"I believe it of the Queen," said Cauvin, dryly.

"And I know it of one astrologer, if there be a devil," said Sir Harry, "though he per-

sists that he practises only the white magic! This astrologer saw, in the future, the picture of a French king, headless and bloody, and above him was written, 'Va chassez l'idole,' and below, 'Ecrasez l'infame.' And one seemed to come from the other. The Queen fainted, they say, and sent for the secret friend, or foe, of you Huguenots, the Duke of Anjou."

"For one who believes so little," said Cauvin, sarcastically, "it strikes me that you are singularly superstitious."

"I believe in nothing but the present," said Sir Harry. "I know that the great amount of gold which I am, by order of our Queen, to transfer to D'Albert for you Huguenots awaits us in Paris, and that my commission on the transaction is the heiress we have here. Then, cher Cauvin, I shall be one of the wealthiest men in the world, for I am rich now, I believe, in money!"

Sir Harry had unconsciously raised his voice; D'Albert spoke loudly to his niece; he was ashamed that she should hear this. "'Tis for the cause!" he muttered. "And he will soon cure her of Popery."

Raoul said nothing. Sir Harry cast a supercilious glance at him, and noted his dogged look.

"A French slave," he thought, "and one who would cut the throat of his benefactor for a little gold. If I were poor, I would do it, too. The difference between vice and virtue, between crime and innocence, is," he added, "that dross which you call money."

Cauvin began one of Clement Marot's hymns; the evil of Raoul's own conscience seemed to have taken human form to taunt and mock him. He hated Cauvin.

"We wait at the Inn of the Three Ducks," said D'Albert.

"I see a light ahead," said Raoul. "'Tis a moving torch."

D'Albert, Sir Harry and Cauvin pressed forward.

Raoul resumed his place beside the prisoner.

"Lady," he said, "I know not how you came by the token which I gave to my own lost little girl years ago; but I swear to you that I will lose my life rather than let you suffer. I have sinned; I will sin again—but believe me, I am not so lost——"

A soft hand touched his arm.

"I do believe in the good in your soul." The soft voice seemed to make a great fighting in his heart. "Remember that. But you cannot help me. It is too late. I know all now. Sir Harry rides back."

"Tell me this," whispered Raoul quickly, "does my little girl live?"

"Yes."

Raoul was called away by Sir Harry, who broke out roughly: "A messenger from Paris. We must strike at once. There have been spies about. The Admiral wills it, though he regrets that he is too ill to take part."

"You mean to carry off the young king, and——"

"L'idole may stand for the Italian woman; but instead of chassez, I believe that Master Cauvin and his clique say kill!"

"Kill!" exclaimed Raoul.

"Cry out like a stuck pig, do!" whispered Sir Harry. "There are ears everywhere. I thought D'Albert had told you all. You shriek at the sight of blood, you who——"

"No more, Sir Harry," said Raoul; "no more! that man with the torch approaches. His livery is black, white, and green; it is enough."

"You know the colors?"

"Well; but I did not know that Henry of Valois was openly of your party."

"He is not; he merely plays with us—it suits him to assume the gallant to our Elizabeth. And who in Provence would suspect the livery of the Duke of being found in the company of Huguenots?"

D'Albert had stopped. He was in deep parley with the man who wore the livery of the Duke of Anjou. Sir Harry Sidney rode forward, with a few careless words to Raoul:

"Look after the Demoiselle!"

Raoul felt that his chance had come, just as both Cauvin and D'Albert came back.

"The Duke of Anjou warns us that he will not play at our game to the end," said D'Albert, looking livid in the moonlight. "He has found out what we meant, and he says plainly that he will not be of us. He had begun to distrust the Duke of Guise; therefore he joined

us ; but retires, since he hears that we intend to—you understand." He spoke in a low tone.

"He is wise," whispered Sir Harry ; "to consent to the abduction of his brother would be to leave the way clear for himself,—but after that, for another—perhaps Henry of Navarre, or Admiral Coligny himself !"

D'Albert bit his lip. The light cynicism of the Englishman's tone offended him.

"This is only a matter of high treason, monsieur—of life and death. And you speak within earshot of my niece."

"Who in a few days will be out of the country," Sir Harry said. "But let us pass on ; the messenger from Paris leads the way torch in hand, an image of Hymen !"

"We go now to the Inn of the Three Ducks," said D'Albert, gloomily. "The soldiers of Sieur de Beaujeancy have invaded it. But they are about to depart. This good man leads us to the wood yonder. There we will wait till the inn be safe."

Sir Harry whispered into D'Albert's ear.

The Chevalier hesitated.

"I care not," he said, "but she may shriek or resist, I care not, if Master Cauvin be willing. First, however, I shall quiet her somewhat by telling her of the fate of her Irish lover, the Count O'Neil. I gave commands to the two men I left at the Château des Roses to despatch him with their daggers as soon as darkness should fall. They are true and tried. He is dead ere this!"

"For the cause," sneered Sir Harry Sidney.

"For the gold which will help the cause," said D'Albert; "the end justifies the means. Give me the order on Seneschal le Gai for the money, and I will prepare her."

Raoul stood by helpless. Well, he thought, if her lover were dead, what did it matter? The Chevalier rode beside her for many yards; he talked earnestly; she did not answer him until he paused. Then she said,—

"You have done to death a gallant man!—a true gentleman——"

D'Albert quickly joined Sir Harry; he did not care to hear that tense tone, so unlike the clear voice of his niece.

"She takes it quietly," said Sir Harry.

"She is a De Florent," answered D'Albert, "the proudest race under heaven!"

Raoul adjusted her cloak; he spoke softly.

"Say but the word, Mademoiselle, we will cut across the vineyard and flee."

"It is too late!" she said.

"We will throw ourselves among the men of the Sieur de Beaujeancy——"

"It is too late!" And she turned her head away. Raoul thought he saw a tear glistening inside her thick veil; his heart was touched.

"Come!" he said, "if I die, it could not be in a better cause—and you, at least, may escape."

For a moment her soft, ungloved hand was laid on his. It seemed to him as if a little dove of peace had fluttered out of the darkness.

"Thank you—thank you. Your name shall never be absent from my prayers."

He felt as if a benediction had fallen upon him. Her voice seemed to come from a broken heart, a heart that had suffered so that nothing earthly could matter to it.

"You would risk your life," she said. "No—it is too late!"

Sir Harry rejoined them. They had passed the vineyard and entered a glade in the wood. Here the moon showed in glimpses; darkness was intensified by the cypress and plane trees. As they passed, the glade was flooded with light.

The messenger had prudently put out his torch, lest it should attract attention from the inn.

"Monsieur Cauvin," said Sir Harry Sidney, with that attempt at jollity which had made the saturnine D'Albert hate him, "the bride and bridegroom wait!"

He did not descend from his horse; he rode near enough to the prisoner—so near that the gold ring, in which was set an enormous ruby, could easily be placed on her finger.

"Permit me, Mademoiselle."

The white hand was held out droopingly. The ruby glowed, like a drop of blood, upon it; and as the moon hid herself in darkness again, Cauvin hastily pronounced the curt formula of the marriage ceremony which the Calvinists had adopted.

The lady hastily withdrew her hand. "I

protest against this sacrilege!" she said in a low voice.

"Are you not my wife?" asked Sir Harry, brutally seizing her hand again and almost crushing it.

"Yes—yes," she said, with a cry of pain.

"These gentlemen are witnesses," he said with a sneer. "I divorced my first wife. You, gentlemen, are witnesses to my second union."

With elaborate courtesy the Chevalier D'Albert turned to Raoul.

"I have the honor to announce to you that the Demoiselle Marguerite de Florent, Châtelaine of the Roses, daughter of the late Vidame de Florent, is now the lawful wife of Sir Harry Sidney."

A sound of an approaching cavalcade interrupted him.

"On! on!" said Sir Harry; "I hear what warns me that this is no time for wooing. You will find me a good husband, Lady Sidney. Obedience and cheerfulness are all I ask."

The bride shivered.

At the signal given by D'Albert, the four horses

cantered into the open field behind the wood, Raoul moody and heart sick. Sir Harry sure now that nothing could happen to tear the heiress from him, and D'Albert wild with anxiety to get to Paris. The messenger from the Duke of Anjou had disappeared.

The cavalcade did not pass them. It took the other road crossing the vineyard. The light of torches borne by men on horses was visible. D'Albert congratulated himself that the road was free when he saw the torches suddenly turn towards them. Raoul now gave the word and the four horses went back swiftly towards the shadow of the trees. There they stood, clothed in darkness made more dark by the yellow glare of the lights borne by the soldiers of the Sieur de Beaujeancy. At their head rode the Count O'Neil.

"He lives—Donnet O'Neil lives!" murmured Raoul. "It is indeed too late!"

There was no reply. The torches had grown dimmer and dimmer in the distance before the four moved. After that they lost no time; all night long they travelled, the Lady Sidney, supported by her planchette, showing no signs of

fatigue. But Cauvin protested; and Sir Harry and D'Albert pressed on rapidly, making a rendezvous for Paris, Raoul Cauvin and Lady Sidney following slowly.

When the day was touched with gray and rose color, they entered the inn of the Lily Flower and good Madame Sansterre conducted the lady to her room, while Cauvin slept on a settle in the garret. The inn was a Catholic resort, and he did not intone the doleful hymns of Clement Marot. In fact, he snored.

Raoul's gold made friends at the inn, whose hostess was not inclined to favor a sour-faced Huguenot preacher. And it did not take long for the old man-at-arms to arrange that Cauvin—ruff, black cloak and all—should be locked, by a valet's mistake, in the attic. Madame Sansterre was profuse in her apologies a day later, but Raoul and Lady Sidney had gone on without him.

V.

AT PARIS.

DONNET O'NEIL, by short cuts, reached the Inn of the Three Ducks in good time; but there was no trace of Marguerite. Impatient, he had started off with a detachment of the Sieur de Beaujeancy's troops before their comrades had finished their late and bountiful supper. He must hasten to Paris on the wings of love! The occasion of the détour was a meeting of the messenger of the Duke of Anjou, who, now that his mission was performed, would gladly have done the gloomy Huguenots and the brutal Englishman an ill turn.

"Messire," said Donnet, bowing low to the livery rather than to the man, "have you seen a party hastening to Paris—a lady and a group of cavaliers—I know not how many?"

"Three," said the messenger, glibly. "And

a lady. In truth," he added, "if it will ease your mind I may say that I was unwilling page of honor at a marriage this very night. Monsieur Cauvin, late of Geneva, hath just united in the bonds of matrimony the Demoiselle de Florent and Sir Harry Sidney."

Donnet's hands tightened on his reins.

"Which way? Which way?" he asked, hoarsely. "Oh, for the love of God and the Holy Virgin, which way?"

The messenger pointed, awed by the change in the questioner's voice.

"Thank you!"

And the soldiers of the Sieur de Beaujeancy dashed by the bridegroom and the bride and almost brushed their garments.

The messenger of the Duke, the careless musketeer Hérold, turned on his horse.

"Heaven help us!" he said. "He rides like the devil. He has lost her! 'Tis a love-story, no doubt. By my troth, the bride seemed to have little of the spirit of a woman! Well, I warned the fools!—Anjou will not protect them; let them go to their doom, for if there be a plot—and I suspect 'tis a hot one and a

failure—the Duke will see the flames burn the Sieur D'Albert before he will raise a finger!" And, whistling the air of the Duke of Guise, which we call "Malbrook," he went to the Inn of the Three Ducks.

It was very fortunate that early in the day of the Feast of the Assumption, Raoul and his charge passed a convent of Franciscan nuns.

"I must hear mass, and see a priest;—that I seemed to consent to the sacrilege of the night hangs heavily upon me," said Lady Sidney, softly. "And perchance 'twould be well for you, too, Monsieur de Cavigny, to kneel at the holy altar."

Raoul grumbled in his beard, but he followed his charge into the great courtyard, where numerous horses and a curtained litter were waiting for guests within. The mass had not begun. And Raoul had no mind to fast, so he betook himself to the large refectory, where strangers were received.

The portress took charge of Lady Sidney, who thanked heaven with all her heart for this brief respite. In the refectory Raoul learned from a musketeer who said he was in the serv-

ice of the Abbé de Gondi, that Brevette and his men had turned on the road to Nimes.

"And wherefore?" demanded Raoul amazed.

"Oh," said the musketeer, as he drained a flagon of wine and wiped his mouth with the back of his hand, "Brevette?—many a flagon did we drink together in the old days!—said Cavigny had probably been killed by the fiery Irishman whose light-of-love he had abducted and that he and the troop,—six less, wounded badly in a fight with Sieur de Beaujeancy," Raoul groaned, "had heard that the Catholics were about to rise and revenge themselves for La Michelade, which took place five years ago."

"I remember," said the lay brother, who handed Raoul a dish of veal and prunes, from which the guest took the piece he fancied with his fingers, "my brother and little sister perished. The Huguenots spared neither woman nor child,—God forgive them. I hope there will be no revenge, for by my faith, God will avenge!"

"Be that as it may," said the musketeer resuming the long cloak he had cast aside,

"there are rumors that our Catholics will avenge the massacre of Nimes. A foolish business, for every Huguenot you kill, another rises."

"But what of Brevette?"

"Are you a friend of his?"

"I am Raoul de Cavigny."

The musketeer's face brightened. "How I would love to cross swords with you, were there time. Ah, Monsieur de Cavigny, your fame is great. The Countess de Valence, who is under the guardianship of the Abbé de Gondi, spoke of you the other day. 'Twas known that you had returned from serving the Princess of Clèves, and your exploits were named by me. 'Tis strange,' she said, 'that so rugged a cavalier should have so fair a daughter.'"

Raoul's face crimsoned, he buried it in his flagon.

"Continue, monsieur," he said.

"Oh, I meant not to offend," said the musketeer, laughingly. "I would willingly try swords with you, Sieur Raoul, but only in jest. 'Yes,' she said," tis well known that the Lady

Sidney, who lives at present in the Convent of the Carmelites, is the daughter of Sieur de Cavigny.'"

"The Lady Sidney!" Raoul raised his hand to cover his face.

"Yes, and the young Countess, whom I, at the request of the Abbé de Gondi, guard on her way to Paris, loves her much. She is an adventurous damsel and she would love to meet a brave soldier, like yourself. After mass ——"

"Your name?" asked Raoul abruptly of the young man.

"Fernand Hérold, my brother is in the service of the Duke of Anjou."

"Yes," said Raoul thoughtfully. "I have met him."

"They said that you had not seen your daughter for many years, and the Countess ——" added Fernand.

"You are kind, monsieur," said Raoul gravely, "will you do me a kindness?" The face of the young musketeer flashed with pleasure; the name of Raoul de Cavigny, though he was only a soldier of fortune, recalled

scenes of terrible fights and warlike tales to the youth of France.

Raoul took out a small piece of parchment from his pouch, erased the pencilled words upon it with a piece of moist bread and wrote—

"The Sieur de Cavigny asks the protection of the Countess of Valence for the Demoiselle de Florent. If the Countess will conduct her to the Lady Sidney, in the convent of the Carmelites at Paris, Raoul de Cavigny will always be her debtor."

"And now," said Raoul, folding the parchment, "I go to Nimes, to bring that fool of a Brevette to his senses. Take my billet, Monsieur Hérold, and, if you ever need a friend, call on Raoul de Cavigny."

Before the young musketeer could recover from his amazement, Raoul had reached the courtyard to mount his horse. He must find Brevette, gather his staff about him, and then for "the little one," if this tale were true; after to reckon with Sir Harry Sidney. He had no fear for the Demoiselle de Florent; were Sir

Harry Sidney to demand her a thousand times the Abbé de Gondi was not one to permit the Châtelaine of the Roses to fall into the hands of a Protestant Englishman.

D'Albert should suffer. As he rode, his fingers, thrust into his pouch for a spur he had taken from his boot, touched the papers he had picked up in the night. They were directed to the Chevalier D'Albert. Raoul rode into the shade of a hedge, for the sun was beginning to be hot, and read—

"*Va chassez l'idole* and the mother mean mischief, unless we dispose of them.

"COLIGNY."

"The Admiral has signed this. He was too ill to write it himself." The other billet was likewise addressed to Cauvin.

"Be in readiness. As the Israelites spoiled the Egyptians, we also will despoil those who would keep us in the house of bondage. Him save if you can ; kill her, the Jezebel.

"COLIGNY."

A third was in Latin to Sir Harry Sidney,—

"The Admiral will receive the packet from Monsieur D'Albert; the money, Sir Harry Sidney may assure the Queen of England, will purchase the arms we need against the followers of the idol."

There was no signature to this, but the crest of Admiral de Coligny was stamped upon it in green wax.

"Fools!" said Raoul. "Oh, for Brevette and the men; and then for the Queen Mother. Ah, D'Albert, you would have killed me—Catherine shall not spare her tortures upon you; and Sir Harry Sidney, thou who hast no doubt betrayed my little one, thou shalt not laugh long."

Raoul felt for these documents many times during his ride. They were safe and his "little one" was alive—but she was the wife of this evil Sidney who had recently wedded the Demoiselle de Florent. Verily, he would wring remorse from Sir Harry—verily, he would wring gold, too, from the Queen Mother for his tidings. And when the false Sidney had paid the penalty of his treachery by death, he and his

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little one would live quietly in Provence perhaps, among the roses. He recalled the day he had said good-bye to her, a yellow-haired child, in London; he left her nurse much gold for "the little one," and he had known that Lady Arundel, a good Catholic, had taken an interest in her, but nothing more than this had he heard in foreign parts.

"Ah, the little one," he said, the dear little one, how happy we shall be together!"

* * * * * *

At Nimes, Raoul found Brevette and his troop, less six wounded in the encounter with the men of the Sieur de Beaujeancy.

His resolutes were turbulent and hard to satisfy with promises, and it was not until the night of the twenty-second of August, that he reached Paris. Donnet O'Neil had been there several days, the most unhappy of men. He lived in a house near the Louvre, sharing three rooms with an old priest he had long known and loved, who served as chaplain to the musketeers of the Duke of Nemours.

The Sieur de Beaujeancy had searched all

parts of Paris for the Demoiselle de Florent. Nanon and Jehan had arrived, having heard from Hérold that Marguerite had become Lady Sidney; they had stopped at the house of Doña Gloria, but they had found it deserted, the lady having taken refuge with her relatives, the De Serrants. Nanon was in despair; she joined in the search. She knew that Sir Harry Sidney had a wife living, for Lady Sidney had gone into Provence to visit the Doña Gloria, and it was she, who fearing danger for Marguerite, had sent the bracelet as a talisman, to gain the friendship of Cavigny. Nanon and Jehan were heart-broken because they could not save Marguerite; they had no hope of tearing her from the possession of Sir Harry Sidney.

The Sieur de Beaujeancy wrote letters to Rome to the Cardinal of Lorraine and to the Bishop of Arles. But Rome was far off; he dared not appeal to the court, for the gruff, honest soldier was in disgrace there for plain speaking; in fact, he was incognito at Paris.

"If I could only get this dagger to her," cried Donnet, "she could make herself safe."

"No," said the Abbé Mirolles as the look of

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his kind old face and white hair softened for a moment Donnet's agony, "speak not of that. She will find grace and strength without resort to the pagan custom of suicide. Let her leave that to the heroines of un-Christian romances. I tell thee, Donnet, hope! I have said masses for a week for thy happiness and for Marguerite; wait and hope!"

Donnet threw himself face downward upon the low settee and groaned as if his heart would break; but he threw the dagger far away from him, and the Abbé cast it into the fire. Marguerite had disappeared; the Lady Sidney had gone, but nobody thought of looking for either of them at the Hôtel of the Countess de Valence.

D'Albert, Sidney and Cauvin spent much of their time in the apartments of the Admiral, who had been shot in the street some days before, and they congratulated themselves that things were going well.

D'Albert even played at tennis with the king, and marked while he played how easy it would be to strike him to the heart.

Coligny, towards the last, was for abduc-

tion only; the Queen Mother could be sent to Italy, but Cauvin and D'Albert were relentless.

Raoul de Cavigny smiled as he passed the apartments of the Admiral and saw Sidney and Cauvin, who were amazed and indignant at the disappearance of Marguerite, in close conference at a window.

He had billeted his men at a tavern where he had limited credit. Unaccompanied, he made his way to the Louvre. Negotiations for the billeting of his men had detained him until long after noon. When he reached the court-yard of the palace he found many old friends, who greeted him. But none of the soldiers was influential enough to obtain for him an audience with the Queen Mother or the King, or even with the Duke of Anjou. At last, in desperation, he thrust the notes, signed "Coligny," into his glove and asked a page to take them at once to Catherine. He was running a terrible risk but he was sure that the page was not a Huguenot, and so he waited in tranquillity. There was no hesitation now; Catherine sent for him at once.

The Queen sat by the great fireplace in the

brown room of the Louvre; she was dressed in a trailing robe of black velvet; a white ruff shown below the coif of the same material, which came into a point on her brow. Her face was olive-tinted and as impassive as a mask; her blue-black eyes glowed as red sparks show in an opal, when Raoul entered.

The Duke of Anjou (her son Henry) and the Duke of Guise stood behind her chair. They were brave in their apparel; the Duke of Anjou in crimson, with a gold-lined cloak; the Duke of Guise in a black silk doublet and hose slashed with white satin. Neither of them had reached twenty-three years of age; they were young for the bloody work of the night to come.

"M. de Cavigny?" asked the Queen in her cold, clear voice.

"The same, Madame," he answered, with a low bow.

"How came you by these?" She held out the embroidered glove and the billets.

He answered frankly he had been paid by D'Albert to serve Coligny and the Huguenots; he knew that there was to be a rising; but

when he had learned that it meant death to her and the King, he had come to tell the truth. He gave the other notes to Guise who, on one knee, presented them to the Queen.

"Sidney!" she exclaimed. "What! the cousin of that preux Chevalier, the young poet—Sir Philip—who is even now in Paris? This Sir Harry is indeed a rotten branch of a fair tree!"

She shuddered in spite of herself, as she read the paper. Then she gave them all, without comment, to the Duke of Anjou.

"And this Admiral," he said, "is not content with poisoning the King's mind against us; he plots to kill him!"

"These papers may be forgeries," Catherine said, with a quick glance at Raoul, who stood cap in hand.

"Forgeries!" exclaimed Guise, who had been permitted to read them. "No! The hand of Coligny, the murderer of my father, is capable of all vileness."

There was silence.

"It is late," said Catherine, rising. "It is late. The King has just returned from the tennis court. He must see these papers. They

are safe, Monsieur de Cavigny, and so you are. For this you, soldiers of fortune as you are, shall indeed be fortunate." She took a white handkerchief from a cushion near her. "To-night tie that about your arm ; for every man of yours that wears that badge and does his duty, and ——"

"Kills," whispered Guise. The Queen nodded, and continued :

"Shall have one-fourth of his weight in silver !"

Catherine lifted a curtain and disappeared. De Cavigny tied the handkerchief on his arm and waited. Voices, low now, again loud, were heard within. Catherine came back with the same glow in her eyes.

"Messieur," she said, calmly, "my son, the King, consents. He will give his orders. It must be done. At an hour after dawn to-morrow there shall be no Huguenot who can bear arms or conspire against the House of Valois in Paris !"

"And we shall not have the odium," said Anjou, "it will be laid at the door of the Church."

"The Church can bear it; she has been promised perpetuity whatever happens," answered Catherine, coldly. "The French monarchy has no such promise."

Raoul went off with the young Duke of Guise to receive his orders. As he passed out he heard the voice of Charles IX. say, behind the curtain, "I will stand it no longer; Coligny is more King of France than I am! Let him die as a traitor should!"

Raoul smiled. Gold and revenge were in his grasp.

Catherine and her advisers used their time with discretion. When the tocsin of the church near the Louvre sounded on that night of horror, the prey was ready for the hunters. Young Philip Sidney was safe at the English Ambassador's. D'Albert and Sir Harry had at last tracked Lady Sidney to the home of the Countess of Valence, and they were reconnoitring in the street in front of it when the tocsin tolled through the darkness. Lady Sidney had received a mysterious message like many in Paris that night. Donnet and Jehan entered the street as the deep tones rang out,

and a light flashed in almost every window. Jehan hastily drew a white handkerchief from his bosom and, tearing it, wound part of it about Donnet's arm and the rest about his own.

"No question, Count," said Jehan, "you shall see!"

There sounded hurrying feet and a tumult, loud cries, pistol shots in distant streets.

Sir Harry Sidney's knock at the door of the Countess de Valence had been answered by a porter.

"Messieurs Sidney and D'Albert!" Donnet heard Sir Harry announce; and then—"I, Sidney, claim my wife!"

Past the porter and like a phantom clothed in white, came the form of a woman. She attempted to bind a kerchief about Sidney's shoulder; her face was hidden by one of the riding masks then so much in vogue. A gold bracelet shone on her arm.

"Marguerite!" cried D'Albert, recognizing the circlet.

"Lady Sidney! what is this folly?" demanded Sir Harry, in anger and amazement.

Donnet caught the name and breaking from

Jehan dashed sword in hand toward the group, his blood boiling; he seemed to tread on air; but he was too late. Round the corner of the house came a group of men, all banded with white. They were led by Raoul de Cavigny. He sprang upon Sidney, while Brevette engaged D'Albert. Sidney was no match for this infuriated old man; he fell, struck to the heart.

"Marguerite! to me!" cried Donnet.

She did not seem to hear; she clung to Sidney, falling as he fell, and still clinging to him. D'Albert's sword was dashed aside by Brevette and a soldier behind pushed him forward. The point of his weapon was thrust downward, and to the heart of the prostrate woman. With a scream of agony she tried to clasp Sidney, while blood gushed from her wound out upon her dress. The torches made a circle about the group; Raoul tried to tear her away from Sidney.

"Come, Mdlle. de Florent," he said, "the brute is dead!"

"Father!" she cried piteously. She tried to speak, "I am dying!" Then, after a great effort: "Do not—do not!—but oh, for-

give him! He is my husband! O God! receive us both!" And she fell,—silent in this world forever.

And then Raoul de Cavigny knew the terrible truth. This woman, dead on her traitorous husband's breast, was his daughter, his "little one," and he had brought her to her death.

And Donnet learned, too, that he had come to Paris in vain; the woman he had followed was not the Châtelaine of the Roses, but the real Lady Sidney!

"There," he said to D'Albert, dragging him from the awed group into the darkness, "bind thyself with this handkerchief; for the sake of Marguerite, I set thee free! and do no evil."

VI.

LETTER FROM THE DONA GLORIA DE MUNOZ TO THE COUNTESS OF VALENCE.

"Now that the Huguenot conspirators, who would have torn down our churches, killed us in our beds and made pig troughs of our holy water fonts are gone, I have returned to my house. The Pope and all the princes of Europe have had Te Deums sung for our deliverance from those fearful creatures. Oh, my dear, you should have been here on the night that they attacked my poor house! I would not give up Marguerite, though she was so foolish as to want to keep her word, but locked her in the still room, which is without windows. And Lady Sidney, God rest her soul, who had come to me in Provence that very day to warn us of the plots of that wicked husband of hers whom she loved even unto death, pretended that she was Marguerite; she rode off with the villains! How we trembled and prayed! But

it has all come right; you should have seen the meeting between Donnet O'Neil and Marguerite! It made me young again! And on Thursday of last week they were married; the Bishop of Arles blessed them. And the roses of Marguerite! They seemed to bloom on purpose! And the troubadours made poems! And Jehan and Nanon, were happy! And Donnet's dear old Abbé came, too. I forgot to tell you that Raoul de Cavigny is making a pilgrimage to Rome, and that the wretch Cauvin, with D'Albert, escaped to Geneva.

Since Marguerite's marriage I am quite lonely. Certainly, those Huguenots deserved their fate, poor creatures! but some of them were such handsome men! It seems a sad thing to deprive the world of fine men, one of whom might have been converted, had he seen me, instead of some of your ugly jades of the court who would drive any man to heresy! But, adieu; the cooler months have come. It is three months since Coligny met the death of a traitor. I have, as a housewife, much to do! Thine.

"GLORIA."

P. S.—The Sieur Beaujeancy will not take No for his answer. I am sure that my dear Don Sebastian would not have me so lonely! Methinks that I shall say Yes.

* * * * * *

"Donnet," said the Abbé, as he sat, on the evening of the marriage in the house of the Loggia, "did I not bid you hope?"

"I have lost the dagger," said Donnet. "Henceforth I trust only in love and hope—no more to war or arms."

And, entering with her arms full of roses, the Châtelaine knelt to receive the benediction of the old priest. The roses she bore were not so splendid as those of August, but they were even more fragrant; and she, more quiet and serene than she had been before her time of trial, was symbolized by the great clusters of white which she laid at the feet of the new statue of Our Lady of Hope, in the loggia.

HOW DONNET REACHED THE KING.

HUNDREDS of years have passed since Donnet O'Neil stood cap in hand before a beautiful lady in a little room in a narrow street in Paris. Donnet was a boy of thirteen; his brown hair was cropped short; his blue eyes looked large in the dark hollows made by recent illness, and his thin wrists showed through the lace ruffles sewn to the sleeves of his little velvet coat.

The gentlewoman to whom he spoke was much older than himself; she was his mother, and she—although her gown was somewhat faded, and her face showed signs of tears—was in his eyes the most beautiful woman in all the world. Donnet's father had recently died in this city of Paris, which he and his mother had learned to hate. And Donnet himself had lately recovered from the same long, wasting fever.

The Count O'Neil was one of those brave Irishmen who had followed the English king, James II., into France after the battle of the Boyne. You must look for the dates and the other circumstances in your history-book. James was a self-willed, narrow, and conceited king, who fled from the battle, leaving his Irish troops to bear the brunt of it, and then said harsh and ungrateful words of them.

The most gallant soldier of this time was Patrick Sarsfield, and of him the king, too, spoke ungratefully. The Count O'Neil had resented all these things, and shown by his manner and words that he would not take insults even from a king. And so when the French king, Louis, had done much to make the English and Irish exiles in France comfortable, the Count Joseph O'Neil and his wife and child had been taken no notice of. They could not return to Ireland. Persecution awaited them there, for the most cruel laws were in force against Catholics. The Count had been refused employment in the army of Louis XIV., owing to the representations of the English king. The young Donnet's grandmother had been a

Frenchwoman of Provence,—one of the family of De Florent, and there was an estate there which now belonged to him, to which he and his mother would have thankfully gone, had there not been some legal difficulties in the way. A word from Louis XIV. would have settled everything, but access to the king was difficult, as the O'Neils had no friend at court.

"Oh, I wish we had an army of our own!—I wish we had!" cried Donnet, still holding his hat in his hand. "If the Earl of Lucan were only the true king of England, instead of this cowardly King James, Ireland would soon be free and her soldiers have something to do at home."

"I am afraid that is treason," said his mother, with a look of alarm. "You must not say it, child,—though I will say for the last time that were Patrick Sarsfield the rightful king, in place of the Stuart, 'twould be better both for religion and liberty in England. But, dear child, we must not talk thus of the king. In our sad case, 'tis better to pray than to rail against Princes."

"I have prayed, mother. All the long night

that I lay in bed, I used this Rosary so much, I fear the pearl beads are worn. I asked God and St. Joseph for help."

"And why St. Joseph particularly?" asked his mother, smiling gently. "Why St. Joseph, Donnet?"

"Oh, I did not forget my patron saint. But St. Joseph was my good father's special friend. And now I am sure he will make it his business to look after us as our father did. Sure, we have no other friend. And, besides, my good mother, St. Joseph was poor himself, and he knows that poor people need warm clothes, and that a young gentleman of my name should not go into his parish church with a broken hat and a soiled plume."

His mother laughed for the first time in many days.

"Ah, my dear," she said, "I have taught you to pray to the saints that they may ask God to give you their virtues, but not to ask for material things."

"But, my good mother," said the boy, "the poor do not need virtues so much as the rich; they need other things, but the rich need noth-

ing but virtue. When we were rich,—when we had my father,—I asked St. Anthony and St. Patrick for a good temper and diligence at my books, and in the art of fencing. Now I need other things,—for you a new robe,—methinks the red brocade you wore at court will not do much longer."

Patrice O'Neil's face saddened.

"Child," she said, "you are right. If St. Joseph does not help us,—as I hope he will, being your good father's patron and the dear guardian of the Holy Child,—we must starve. There is naught left for us to sell except the pearl rosary you hold in your hand."

"Sell, dear mother? We never can!" cried Donnet. "Never! Never!" And he drew the little sword which hung at his belt as if some one was about to attack him.

"No sword-play, Donnet," said his mother. "We Irish are always too ready to draw our swords,—for others, unhappily. Methinks you have not yet all the virtues of the poor. You cannot expect St. Joseph to help you until you have learned to bridle your temper."

The boy returned the sword to the scabbard,

and said nothing. His mother took the pearl rosary in her hands and looked at it with a sigh. It was made of large pearls and silver; attached to the foot of the crucifix by a strong silver chain was the medallion of a lady in a Spanish costume. Under this medallion was the appeal: "Ora pro me!"

"I know not who this lady is," said the mother, "She has a noble look. This rosary was given to your grandmother, Marguerite O'Neil de Florent, by the holy Vincent de Paul. She gave all her private fortune to the poor foundlings of Paris, and the holy man gave her this in return. It is a great treasure. But, dear child, if thou wouldst break thy fast to-morrow, we must part with it."

"I will starve first!"

"And leave me,—all alone?"

Tears came into the boy's blue eyes.

"It is very hard, mother. Oh, I wish we were not of gentle blood. Nobody cares for us of gentle blood, because we will not beg. I wish I were a boy of the street, and then I could beg for you, mother!"

"There is a white plume of your father's in

my casket,—where there is little but that,—and I will make the hat so that you may not be ashamed."

"A new hat!" exclaimed Donnet, his eyes flashing with pleasure.

"An old hat made new," said his mother, wondering how so good a child could be so vain.

"A new plume!" said Donnet, laughing. "Why, I asked St. Joseph for that, too, and here you give it to me. If I had a new plume, mother, I could go to the king,—King Louis, I mean; I would ask nothing from the other one,—and tell him that Les Roses is ours, and ask him to let us go there!"

"Dreams, child! The king would have you whipped from his presence!" his mother said, bitterly.

The heart of Patrice O'Neil was heavy. Young, beautiful, flattered, she had lived to see her son and herself outcasts and beggars. "Well—God's will be done," she said. At the worst, she could send her son with a letter to the prior of La Trappe and then go somewhere until her death should come.

But Donnet had no such thoughts. He sat on the carved settle, near the window and made stories in his mind about the Spanish lady, whose portrait asked everybody to say the beads for her. He was not sad, because he did not see the tears his mother dropped on the white plume she was sewing into his hat.

He was more cheerful when a knock was heard at the door, and a serving maid appeared with a rose and a large pastry in her hands.

"The wife of Master Nerville, downstairs, sends these to the little boy who was so kind to her children before he became sick himself."

The Countess searched for her purse, to reward the maid, but she disappeared; and the hand was withdrawn empty.

"Oh, what a red, red rose!" cried Donnet.

"Madame Nerville's bush, which she keepeth always in her window, hath bloomed at last. And what a pastry! Oh, mother, 'tis of young pigeons. *Now* we shall have our breakfast to-morrow."

Tears came into his mother's eyes; she put

the pastry, which was a giant even for those times, into the cupboard.

"We might have known!" cried Donnet. "To-morrow is the nineteenth of March. Sure, St. Joseph wouldn't let us go without breakfast on *his* day,—and father up there in Heaven with him too."

And with gladness in their hearts, mother and son knelt praying in the bare, cheerless room. It was an odd picture; the beautiful Countess, with the long velvet train of her dilapidated court dress trailing over the floor, and the frail, little boy with his rosary in his hand kneeling beside her. The truth was, that her boy's confidence in St. Joseph had given her good cheer.

On the next day,—which happened to be clear and warm,—Donnet went to Mass with his mother, who wore a frayed cloak and tucked up her train; but his new plume, which was very long and curly, delighted him. Now he looked like the son of the Count O'Neil!

Both mother and son had received the Blessed Eucharist. After breakfast Donnet asked permission to go out. The streets were

quiet, and his mother, wishing to be alone for awhile on the feast day of her dead husband, was willing that he should go. He stopped at Madame Nerville's door on his way down, and thanked her for her gifts.

"I am going to the court of the king, Madame," he said, in his broken French, "and I shall get back my estate of Les Roses, and then you shall come and have all the roses you like; for, as you know, my estate is in Provence, near the city of Arles, where the roses are most beautiful."

"And who will let you into the court of the king?" asked Madame Nerville. "I fear me you will get no nearer than the gates, dear child."

"St. Joseph will make way," he said. "I know he will. Why, this is his feast."

Madame Nerville shook her head and sighed. "He will not work a miracle," she said, as she closed the door.

Donnet knew the way well; he had been to the king's palace many times. But it seemed as if Madame Nerville were right; the guards at the gate laughed at the boy. One of them

sauntered away after the first refusal to admit Donnet; the other laughed and said:

"What could induce a ragged boy like you, with a plume stolen from somebody's old hat, to think he could see the king?"

"I am Donnet O'Neil!" cried the boy, turning very red. "I am not ragged!"

The soldier laughed and pointed to a long tear in Donnet's sleeve, which, however, had been neatly sewn.

Tears of indignation stood in Donnet's eyes.

"Who sent you?" asked the guard, amused by the anger of the boy.

"St. Joseph," said Donnet.

"Then Monseigneur St. Joseph should have given you a passport," said the man, with a laugh, "and have taught you to speak French like a Frenchman."

"I am Donnet O'Neil," said the boy, with all the dignity he was capable of. "See,—if I were a little ragged boy out of the street, I should not have a rosary like this!" And he held up his rosary of pearls. The guard good-naturedly pushed him away.

"You must let me in," Donnet cried.

The guard laughed again.

"His Majesty is about to leave for Versailles; he would be charmed, if he were interrupted by a street urchin——"

"I must see him, monsieur," said Donnet, not moving. "I am sure St. Joseph will make him see me."

"What does the little English boy say?" asked a sweet voice within the gate.

"I am not an English boy," cried Donnet; "I am an Irish boy!"

A low laugh followed, and an old lady, with soft dark eyes and powdered head surmounted by a lace hood, stood in the walk.

"Madame," said Donnet, "dear Madame, I must see the king."

The lady looked down at the boy, smiling, and he found new courage; yet he could not speak; he held up his rosary.

The lady saw the portrait attached to the cross.

"It is a token;" she said to the guard, "let the little Irish boy enter. That is the picture of the king's mother, Queen Anne. Ah, I remember it well; this is the rosary she gave

long ago to the holy saint, Vincent de Paul. Since you bear that, my boy, the king will not refuse to see you. Come—I am Madame de Charolois, once a little maiden in the train of the late queen,—Heaven rest her soul!"

The old lady resting on a black staff, inlaid with mother-of-pearl, took his hand and hobbled by his side.

"And so you are Irish! Ah, the Irish are brave! Not long ago my Irish cousin, Monsieur de Barnwell, fell fighting for the king!"

"Semper et ubique fidelis!" exclaimed Donnet, lifting his hat, as he had ever been taught to do, when he mentioned the motto of the Irish Brigade.

"Always and everywhere faithful," repeated Madame de Charolois, translating it into French. "And your name?"

"I am Donnet O'Neil, the son of Count Joseph O'Neil——"

The lady paused and dropped his hand. "Dear child," she said, "I am sorry, but I cannot present you to His Majesty. The O'Neils of your branch are out of favor,—the King of England has spoken disadvantageously of you,

and only to-day the king ordered that your estate of Les Roses should pass to the elder branch of De Florent ——"

Donnet's face grew so pale that the kind lady became frightened.

"I must see King Louis,—it is St. Joseph's day," he said in a weak voice. The old lady seemed distressed. At that moment from behind the marble statue which stood in front of a velvet curtain came a splendidly attired man, with a curled and powdered peruque, and a coat of white satin, embroidered with gold. Two gentlemen walked behind him. Donnet questioned his guide with his eyes; hers answered him. He ran forward and threw himself on his knees.

"Ho!" said the king, "what young gentleman is this,—and with our mother's picture! Monsieur de St. Simon," he added to one of the gentlemen, "help the boy to rise; he is weak, and bring the beads to us."

Donnet rose, hat in hand, and gave the beads to the king before M. de St. Simon could interfere.

"These beads were once the queen our

mother's," he said, "now ask what you will, child, quick,—I must to Versailles," he added kindly, but with some surprise, as he observed the darned coat of the boy.

"The beads were my grandmother's," Donnet said, forgetting his nervousness, "and I came to ask you to restore,—because your people say you can refuse nothing on St. Joseph's day,—to restore my estate of Les Roses, in Provence, so that my mother and I may not starve."

The king looked inquiringly at the Duke de St. Simon.

"You know everybody, Monsieur; perhaps you can tell me who this child is?"

"He must be the young Count O'Neil de Florent," said the duke, "the son of that O'Neil whom the English here do not love."

"This boy!" said the king, in astonishment, "why they told me he was a man, seditious, insolent, arrogant!"

"Oh, Sire," said Donnet, "my father was brave,—as brave as you are; he was a good soldier. The English speak evil of us Irish soldiers because we did not run away at the

battle of the Boyne." And he drew his frail form to its full height. The king laughed.

"And thy father?"

"Dead."

There was silence. Madame de Charolois watched the king's face anxiously. He did not like unpleasant words, such as death.

"And who takes care of you?"

"I take care of my mother," said Donnet, "and St. Joseph takes care of me. There is no other to take an interest in us,—that is, no other relative. St. Joseph was my father's patron. He knows what we need most; he understands, since he had the Mother and the Child to care for."

The king looked keenly at the boy, and then sighed. He kissed the picture attached to the crucifix, and gave it back to Donnet.

"I wish I were a boy again," he said. "You are right to trust St. Joseph. And so Les Roses belonged to the grandmother who left you this rosary?"

"Yes, Sire."

"Ah, yes,—De Florent, I remember the name. Les Roses is yours, little man." The

king took St. Simon's tablets and wrote a line. "Madame de Charolois, see that the boy is not hungry. And Monsieur le Duc, have the papers in the De Florent matter cancelled,—this young Irishman must have the place. St. Joseph commands it."

He waved his hand to Donnet, who turned to Madame de Charolois, with his eyes full of tears. "Madame," he said, "I—I ——"

He fell at her feet fainting. And the good lady sent him, when he had recovered, home to the narrow Paris street in her own coach, blazing with heraldic bearings; and Madame Nerville thought the lackeys would break down her door with their knocking; and Patrice O'Neil turned pale when she heard it, for fear something had happened to her dear boy. The great pastry, with a pitcher of milk, stood ready for him when he entered, white and weak.

"Ah, little mother," he said, taking her hand, "St. Joseph has given us breakfasts for many a day." Then he told her all.

* * * * * *

Down in Provence, the land of roses, Donnet

and his mother were very happy. One of her greatest pleasures was to get rid of the court gown with the great train, which had been so long the badge of her poverty. On St. Joseph's day every year, Donnet wrote to Madame de Charolois, and on the same day for many years Madame Nerville and her children left the dark, narrow street, to partake of a great pigeon pastry covered with roses and to stay, for many spring days in the land of Provence. And until this day, the pearl rosary hangs in front of a little statue of St. Joseph, in the home of a descendant of Donnet O'Neil in a land far from Ireland and France,—America; but it carries with it the same blessing.

THE CHILDREN OF THE PETREL.

Two children wandered all day long, sad and fearful. Once Gerald laughed with joy, and forgot the horrible night that had just passed; for he came suddenly upon a clam lying on the beach; and in picking it up he found a dozen others in the sand. One of these clams had opened its shell, and tried to close it again on a sharp pebble. The clam could not close its stony lips, and when Gerald saw it, it was gaping on the sand. He was pleased, because he knew that his little sister could now have something to eat. Once, when their ship had touched at an island, a sailor had taken him ashore on his back, and had opened some clams for him. Now he knew what to do. He made his poor, tired little sister sit down in a nest of dry sea-weed, under a big rock; then with a flat, sharp shell he opened the clams. He was

afraid to use his own knife,—a most precious thing to a boy,—for fear the blade should break. Geraldine raised her dark-fringed eyelids, when the clam-juice was poured into her mouth, to look up for a moment. But as it was the first taste of food she had had that day, she soon showed that she liked the little clams which her brother put into her mouth. The color came back to her cheeks after a time, and she smiled as Gerald swallowed his clams in quick succession.

The sun was warm on the sand, and, after a time, Geraldine went to sleep. Gerald covered her up with the warm, dry sea-weed, and wandered off a few paces to a little grove near. Here, on the ground, he saw a long trail of the arbutus,—the aromatic May-flower. This he wreathed into a crown and laid it beside his sister. He knew that it would please her when she should awake.

He thought of the events of the night; it seemed as if he had a bad dream. But it had been no dream. Yesterday he and Geraldine, with the kind Father O'Mally, had been passengers aboard the Petrel. Last night they

had been awakened by the cry that the ship was ashore on the rocks. A sudden storm had sprung up, and the poor little ship tossed and struggled, beating itself against the rocks like a bird trying to escape from a net.

Geraldine and Gerald were seized in the arms of Father O'Mally, wrapped in a big cloak, and lowered into a boat. There was a strange rush around them; the high whistling of the wind, salt spray on their faces. They were lifted far up by the waves, and then dropped far down. Father O'Mally told them not to be afraid; but they were very much afraid, though their faces were so covered by his cloak that they could not see the lightning that seemed to cut the sky with its zigzag blades.

After a time, during which poor Gerald clasped his ivory crucifix tight, and prayed with all his heart, Father O'Mally was parted from them. They heard him whisper: "God bless you!"

There was a deafening crash; the boat broke to pieces on the beach, and Geraldine and Gerald found themselves entangled in a great mass of wet sea-weed on the beach. The Pe-

trel and their little boat had gone down. These little children were left alone.

Geraldine, who was only seven years old, cried loudly for her own dear Father O'Mally ; Gerald, who was ten, knew that the sea had swallowed him. Fortunately, the priest's thick cloak had protected them from the sea. They were damp, but not thoroughly wet. They made a tent of it as best they could, and waited for the dawn. When the sun rose above the ocean they were very glad. They looked again and again, for some trace of the Petrel, there was none. Waves followed one another, breaking on the beach in white foam. The sun grew warmer and warmer. It was early in spring, and there was a new breath of softness in the air.

Gerald thought of the cold of the night before, and shivered. Then, to drive the thought away, he looked at his little sister, and smiled as he saw the garland of the arbutus beside her.

These two children had lost their father and mother a year ago. A sudden fever had carried off many people on the coast of Normandy,

and among them were Gerald and Geraldine's father and mother. This had been a sad blow to the children; their father's dear friend, Father O'Mally, had taken care of them; he had put them in the care of some kind nuns at St. Malo.

The Captain, their father, had been driven from Ireland by the unjust laws against the Irish, and he had entered the service of France. He had acquired some property in Normandy, and there he dwelt when not engaged in military duty. Father O'Mally was his chaplain, and one of the family,

Father O'Mally had been called by his spiritual superiors to the island of Cuba, and he could not bear to leave his dear little friends behind him. He was permitted to sell their estate, by the terms of their father's will, and he did this. With them, an attendant, and all their money and jewels, he started in a French vessel, *L'Etoile*, but it was wrecked. The Petrel, an English bark, took them and all their belongings on board, and, though it was bound for the new English settlement on Plymouth Rock, the captain promised that, after he had

discharged his cargo of breadstuff and household gear for the Pilgrims, he would make for Cuba. He could easily do this, for Father O'Mally offered him a high price. But we know what happened; we know the Petrel's fate, and that of all her crew and passengers; and we find Gerald and Geraldine resting not far from that famous Plymouth settlement so famous in history.

As Gerald turned his gaze from his little sister, whose cheek had now become as pink as the arbutus, he saw columns of smoke rising to the horzon. And under the roofs from which that smoke rose dwelt some noted New Englanders, Miles Standish and Priscilla, and John Alden in those early days of spring, and last days of Lent.

Gerald's eyes sparkled as he saw the smoke. It meant a fire, and a fire meant a hearth, and a hearth meant welcome. There would be warmth and food for Geraldine, and perhaps their clothes might be changed. But then he remembered that his clothes were in the big, oaken chest, and he knew that the sea had swallowed it up.

Along the edge of the breakers was a fringe of sea-weed, spars and other rubbish cast up by the sea in the night. Perhaps the chest might be there. He knelt first, and said a prayer to St. Antony. Surely, St. Antony, who always found lost things, would not refuse to get back the chest of clothes.

He went to the edge of the water:—sea-weed, a broken table, a soaked book. He picked the book up. He knew it was Father O'Mally's Breviary; he kissed it, and put it under his arm. Then he saw a box of broken bottles, and at last, after much looking, two large chests, side by side, and one of them was his. They were embedded in the sand, and a low ledge of rock stood between them and the ocean. Gerald could only hope that the waves might not carry them away in the night; for he could not move them with all his strength.

He saw a man with a peaked hat and a black cloak coming towards him along the beach. He ran back to Geraldine as fast as he could go. He threw himself down on the sand near her, clutching the little sword that hung at his belt. His crucifix, thrust between the

folds of his black doublet, showed plainly as the stranger paused for a moment to look at the children. Gerald rose and stood still, with his sword in his hand.

"Ha!" said the stranger, in an austere voice. "You would fight, little man!"

Gerald looked up at him; his face was reddened by the hardships of winter, his eyes were black and piercing, his expression almost terrible in its gloom. His peaked hat and his inky cloak made him all the more dreadful in the eyes of the little boy. The man's face took a kindlier look as he noticed the sleeping Geraldine in her garland of arbutus. But his brow became as black as night, as he saw the crucifix. Gerald, who, young as he was, noted that something was wrong, tried to feel very brave; but the expression of the stranger was so severe, that the boy's heart failed. To him, the figure of his dear Lord on the cross meant peace and pardon; and so he took it from his bosom and held it out to the stranger, instead of the tiny sword.

The stranger's face flushed; he bent forward and tried to dash the sacred symbol from the

boy's hand. But Gerald started back, and avoided his blow. Geraldine awoke with a cry.

"Ye be idolaters!" cried the man. "I will have you burned in the fire as witches or bewitched," he said, "unless you give up that idol to be destroyed."

Gerald, who had heard French spoken so long, found it hard to understand the man's words at once. He hesitated.

"Come, give it up,—that I may cast it into the sea!" repeated the stranger.

Gerald put it back into the folds of his doublet, and seized his little sword.

"Take it, if you can," he said. "Oh, if I were a man, instead of a little boy, I would teach you to respect the cross."

"Even you, child of the evil one, thirst for blood," said the man. "It is natural for the Papist to desire the blood of the godly. Whence comest thou?"

"From a ship, the Petrel, which is no more."

The man started.

"The Petrel! Alack! 'Tis well the winter

is over, or the stores the Petrel had aboard would be sorely missed by our people. Your name?"

"Gerald," said the boy, resolved to say as little as possible.

"And your country?"

"My father and my grandfather were Irishmen, and I——"

"The Irish were ever a pestilent race," muttered the man. "You will stay with us, since you have been sent hither, and we will teach you to hate the idol you have just shown me. There is one among us now who is even an idolater, I suspect, for he is of the Irish blood. Give me the idol!"

"Never," said Gerald, "I will die first."

"Who is he? who is he?" asked Geraldine. "He makes me afraid."

"I do not fear him," answered Gerald, though he was trembling all over. "Do not cry, Geraldine, he cannot hurt us."

"If you will throw that Popish cross into the sea," the man said, "I will take you home with me, and you and your little sister will be as brands plucked from the burning. You

shall depart from your Popish ways, and listen to godly words. Otherwise," said the man, craning his long neck high above the stiff white ruff about it, "you shall be left here to perish, or be burned as the witches are burned. How do I know that ye be not foul witches in the fair forms of children?"

Gerald looked at the man steadily with his clear, innocent eyes.

"I thought you were a Christian, because I knew not that pagans dressed in clothes like yours. We will come among you,—yes, and we will teach you what the crucifix means, and even little Geraldine, though she is but five years of age, can tell your children the story of our Lord's birth." Gerald put his arm around his little sister's waist, dropped his sword, and again took the crucifix from his doublet.

The man's face became crimson.

"You mock me!" he said, angrily. "I verily believe that you are imps of Satan, risen from the depths, and cast up by the sea."

And he went on, leaving them, as the sun was going down. Some distance within the

little wood where Gerald had gathered the arbutus was a deserted hut. It had an evil reputation. The people of the settlement said that it was the haunt of witches,— that black dogs with flaming eyes might be seen at night running about its neglected garden, and that a witch was observed to fly from its chimney on a broomstick. Of course this was nonsense.

Gerald took his sister to the hut, which contained no furniture. Father O'Mally had told them always to carry flint, steel, and tinder with them. Gerald piled the chimney-piece high with dry sea-weed and wind-falls of boughs. There was soon a roaring fire. Then he remembered the keys that hung to the chain about his neck. Bidding Geraldine enjoy the warmth of the fire, he ran down to the sea, and tried the chests with his keys. On top of one he found a thick, woollen cloak, and beneath a box containing the provisions dear Father O'Mally had made for the celebration of Geraldine's feast day, which was Easter Monday. There was a large cake, hard and rich with almonds and raisins, seven little wax candles,

a flask of sweet wine, and some little pink lozenges. The water had not injured anything. Below these trifles there were cups of silver, gold plate, rich cloth, and several caskets. Gerald took one of the caskets out; it was very heavy; he could not carry it, so he put it back again, and locked the chest.

Geraldine was weeping when he returned. She was lonely; she wanted Martha, her nurse; she wanted mamma and papa and Father O'Mally. Gerald gave her a piece of cake and a sip of the sweet wine; and they had a little feast together. But Geraldine was not satisfied with the rich cake; she wanted milk and bread and butter. Gerald forgot his own fears,—for the shadow of the frowning man in the peaked hat lay on his heart,—and hung his beautiful crucifix on the wall, with the garland of arbutus around it; and beneath it he put two of the lighted candles.

"To-morrow is Easter Sunday," he said, "and we will rejoice. But to-night we will watch by our dear Lord, and ask Him to take our sufferings as an offering."

Geraldine, pleased with the lights, was con-

tent with a drink of water he brought her in the silver cup covering the mouth of the flask, from the disused well near the door.

The night closed around them. It was a quiet night, and the sound of the wood fire, and the low boom of the sea were the only noise that broke the silence.

"I am afraid," whispered Geraldine, drawing closer to her brother, and putting her curly, golden head against his shoulder; "I saw a face at the window."

Gerald shivered, but said bravely:

"Let us sing. Who can hurt us when the figure of our dear Lord is yonder, among our flowers?"

"Well, sing," said Geraldine, closing her eyes. "Oh, I wish we were with papa and mamma, and the angels."

And Gerald began, in his clear voice:—

"Carol Easter, carol Easter,
Sing aloud, Our Lord is free,
After darkness, after sorrow,
He has ris'n triumphantly;
Carol loudly, carol sweetly,
He has ris'n for you and me,
He's Our Father, He's our Brother,—
He who died upon the tree."

Geraldine joined in with her shrill, piping voice:

"Carol Easter, sing of Easter,
Sing aloud, Our Lord is free!"

Outside in the darkness, there was a group of men. One was the gloomy man who had spoken to Gerald on the sand; his face was pressed against the little window.

"See the idolaters at their work,—they are adoring images!" he said. "Let them perish. I say, Ezekiah Smite-the-Breast, we must burn them as they are, in this foul witch's nest, lest a curse be brought upon our good work."

"Even so," said a shrill voice near him, "even so, godly Master Warren, it must be done. 'Twill give our good ministers many a text against Popish witchcraft, when they hear the tale. Hark, they sing some devilish song to Satan. He will yet appear, and whisk them and their idol away, if we make not quick work."

"Carol Easter, sing of Easter,
Sing aloud, Our Lord is free,
After darkness, after sorrow,
He has ris'n triumphantly."

A groan rose from the dozen black-cloaked men outside. Gerald heard it, and, with a sudden impulse, drew Geraldine to the crucifix, and, kneeling, kissed the feet of the figure. The boy's heart almost ceased to beat. The faces at the window seemed horrible to him,—faces of monsters. At the foot of the crucifix was safety. Geraldine clung to her brother with all her might, sobbing fitfully. There was no more singing.

A young man, wearing a fur cap, separated himself from the outskirts of the group, and approached the window. He was touched by the sight of the two little creatures kneeling in the fitful firelight before the crucifix.

"Why, they are but children," he said; "surely you would not slay them. They have been cast ashore, as I was, from a wreck; surely you will spare the babes."

He spoke in a soft, rich voice.

"Smite and spare not, so sayeth the Scripture," said Master Warren; "to-day the boy there even threatened me with a sword,—a bewitched sword, I suspect, for no human child would have been so bold. I am assured that

these children of Satan will bring plague and murder, and disease of cattle, and the wrath of Jehovah upon our colony. Slay them,—find the wood and use the torch;—let us rid the land of this nest of witches and the foul brood within!"

The black cloaks groaned in sympathy. Gaston Lacy, the young man who had spoken, clenched his fist. Tears rushed to his eyes, as he thought of those innocent children; his voice was choked. His first impulse was to defy the group of bigots; his second, to remember that it would probably be the means of destroying both himself and the little ones. He had been thrown by shipwreck on the hospitality of the colony; he had worked hard for it, and shirked no task, and yet, as he never went to the meeting-house, he was suspected. It was only the friendship of that great man in the colony, Captain Miles Standish, which prevented his punishment for this omission. Gaston Lacy was a Catholic, and he longed, with a heart-sick longing, for the consolations of the Church.

He must save the children,—even if he died

for it. He judged that it would take the crowd some time to fire the hut. Would he have time to reach the settlement, to find Captain Miles Standish?—*he* would never consent to have the dear little children sacrificed, no matter what the rest might say. And yet, if the thatch had dried in the hot sun, a spark from Master Simons' flint and steel might do the horrible work.

Gaston, praying with all his heart, started off in the shadows towards the settlement. He had gone only a few yards when he saw a woman,—and doubtless a woman of quality, by her stately walk,—thickly cloaked, leading a little child by the hand. She might help him!

"Ah, little one," he heard her say to the child, "you should not have wandered so far; I have looked for you since the evening meal, and so have all our good neighbors."

"Oh, Mistress Alden," said Gaston, "is it you? Thank God! Come with me at once,—they are murdering two little children."

Priscilla Alden dropped the cloak from about her face, and half smiled at Gaston's evident

fear. "See," she said to the little one who was clinging to her, "this might have happened to you, had you wandered farther in search of the May-flower."

"I did but want to make a basket for thee, mother," began the child.

"Come, Mistress Alden, or it will be too late! Even now I see the torch flashing in Master Simons' hand.

"Whither?"

"To the witches' hut."

Priscilla Alden hesitated. It was a name of ill-omen, and she herself believed in witches; but she trusted Gaston, and she followed him to the hut.

Gerald and Geraldine still knelt at the foot of the crucifix. The fire which had been well fed with knots and sea-weed, lit up the little room. The crucifix, surrounded by its May-flower wreath, the golden heads of the children, Gerald's white face and clasped hands, told their own story, as Priscilla, with an air of authority, pushed her way through the group, and looked in the window. Geraldine's primrose head was set trustingly on her brother's shoulder; and

this touched Priscilla's heart. And at this moment, Gerald, feeling his little sister's sobs, —she was afraid to cry aloud,—began to sing, to give her courage, in his trembling voice:

"Carol Easter, sing of Easter,
Like a new tree from the ground,
Carol Easter, carol Easter,
Comes Our Lord with glory crowned."

It was a hymn his mother had taught him. Priscilla felt a sob in her own throat, as she turned away.

"I must see those little children," she said, turning to Master Warren, who stood ready to apply the torch to the thatch.

"They must die the death,—they and their idol," said Master Simons. "Away! Mistress Alden, if you would not be cursed by the witches. These children are but imps of the evil one."

The other men groaned, piling more brushwood about the house. "Gaston!" said Mistress Alden, her eyes flashing, "break open that door!"

Gaston's mighty foot and fist obeyed her in

an instant. She entered swiftly, and clasped the children in her arms.

"Now," she cried, "let them dare to burn John Alden's wife!" Master Warren dropped his torch and followed her, his face white with rage. Gaston took Gerald, and Priscilla followed him with Geraldine and her own little one. But Gerald had not forgotten to take his own dear crucifix from the wall.

Master Warren tried to strike it from his hand as he passed out. But Priscilla,—she was a strong woman,—thrust his hand aside.

"It is the image of Christ," she said solemnly, moved by a power she understood not.

Gaston knelt and kissed her hand—

"Mistress Alden," he said, "you and yours shall be blessed for this forevermore."

Warren applied his torch to the hut. The frail structure blazed up. Geraldine burst into tears; it was for her lost wreath of arbutus.

* * * * * *

The children spent Easter in the house of the Aldens. Their chests holding all their fortune,

were given to them by the powerful Miles Standish. In May a ship touched at the colony, bound for England ; and it took back on their way to France, the two children and their protector Gaston. They fared well among friends there, and lived happy lives. And many, many times did Gaston and Gerald and Geraldine pray for the good Priscilla, and say : " May she and her children be blessed for evermore ! "

THE STRANGE ADVENTURES OF FRANK WOOD.

I.

ORONCO HEARS WORDS.

FRANK WOOD looked over the broad expanse of the Delaware River, and wished with all his heart for many things. In the first place, he was a boy and wanted to be a man. In the second place, he wanted all his grandfather's gold, which had been buried somewhere. In the third place, he wished that his grandfather was beside him on the wooden pier where he sat fishing.

But his father was ill in the wooden house that showed beyond the blossoming apple-trees, and his mother and his sisters were very sad and anxious. He wished, too, that he had another brother;—then he might take a long

tramp and perhaps fall in with some adventurous man who might hire him and give him a chance in the world. As it was, he dared not venture far, for his mother and the girls would be unprotected. If he could only find the gold,—if he could only find the gold and the rubies and the diamonds hidden somewhere, how happy he would be! If he were only a man, he could go forth to win his way in the world. But what was the use of wishing? He looked at the great sparkling river. A great crowd of water-fowl settled in the creek near. He wished he had his gun, but the ducks came in such great mobs every day that he could afford to wait. He turned his head and looked up the mouth of the creek. All he saw was a patch of young green leaves floating on the surface of the water. His face brightened. He had been very lonely until he saw that patch of green. Slowly it floated towards the ducks that made a group in the silvery sparkle of the creek. Frank was as quiet as a mouse. A big swan glided among the smaller birds without disturbing them. The mass of young boughs, with apple blossoms among the leaves, followed in the track

of the swan. Suddenly a large gander, flecked with bluish green, sank beneath the water. Then one of the fattest of the ducks followed and then another. Frank noticed that each of the birds that disappeared had its breast and neck low in the water. A fourth one went down, and then the swan herself was drawn under, uttering a slight cry. At this the birds rose high and flew towards the opposite shore.

A dark face, with beady eyes, rose above the green leaves.

"Oronco!" said Frank.

A grunt was the answer. But the beady eyes brightened, and two copper-colored hands were held up to show the dead birds.

"I will be back," Oronco said, slowly.

"I am glad!" Frank answered.

The Indian threw the birds to his friend,—he had strangled them under the water,—and waded up the creek again. He hid himself for a few moments, making his appearance clothed in a coarse white shirt and breeches of chamois and wearing a round, coonskin cap. He walked along the bank of the creek, and squatted beside Frank on the pier.

"Ugh?" he said, taking a corn-cob pipe from the pouch that hung from his leather belt.

"Father is no better, Oronco."

"Ugh!" said the Indian, pointing to the fattest of the ducks.

"No;—he cannot eat;—mother and the girls have tried everything. Oh, Oronco, I am afraid."

Oronco did not answer.

"There is a medicine-man in the great town," he said, after a long pause.

"It is far," answered Frank, "he would ask much money and we have none."

Oronco drew his long hunting-knife from its sheath and looked at it significantly.

"I could bring him."

Frank laughed.

"I am afraid that the good people of Philadelphia would not approve of bringing a doctor to my father in that way. Oh, to think, Oronco, that my father must remain ill when there is so much treasure laid in earth somewhere which belongs to us."

"Something will happen," said Oronco, in his guttural tone. "It is many years since the

"My mother must have lost it," said Frank.

"No," said Oronco.

"Well, she will be pleased to have it."

"The shad will be here soon," said Oronco. "Then your father will eat."

"I hope so," said Frank, brightening.

"I will bring you the first of the shad," said Oronco. He took Frank's line and began to fish. Frank ran up the path to the house. Oronco landed one or two small fish, thinking all the time of the nets he had put up, to catch the coming shad. He grew restless.

Hauling in the line, he left it on the pier and went, as soft-footed as a panther, into the woods on the bank. There he undressed. A splash in the waters of the creek, and then he disappeared. In his place there floated gently up the creek a mass of laurel and young branches of the apple-trees.

"I will hear more words," he said to himself.

Frank's mother was in the bright, roomy kitchen. The kettle swung in the fireplace, and the shelf above it was gay with shining brasses and white and blue china.

She stood by the window ironing at a white-covered board. She was tall, her brown hair, just tinged with gray, was drawn high up from her forehead, after the manner of the picture that Frank had just received.

"How is father?" Frank asked.

"There is no change," his mother answered, in a low tone. "Father Vero has just left him. He gives little hope."

"Oh, mother!" said Frank, his eyes filling. He could not speak another word.

"Father Vero thinks that if he could see the great doctor down in Philadelphia, he might be helped."

Frank did not answer; he thought. The Wissahickon Creek was twenty miles away. Could he reach Philadelphia by way of the Wissahickon? He had heard Oronco say there was a short way. Could this be the short way? By the river direct, the distance must be over forty miles.

"Mother," he said, "I will go for this doctor. I will take the sail-boat and start at once—at once."

A gleam of hope came into his mother's face.

"Dear boy!" she said. Then her face changed.

"But we have no money."

"The great doctor must have had a father and a mother; he must have loved him, as I love my father. And mother, I will tell him that. The time will come when I can get some work to do, and then I will pay him."

A look of reflection came into the blue eyes of Mrs. Wood. She rested her head on her hand for a moment. Frank watched his mother closely. For a moment there was something in her eyes that reminded him of the picture in his pocket.

"Mother," he said, "here is a picture of my beautiful Aunt Patrice, whom we left in France."

His mother took the miniature.

"It is very like Patrice! I wish that she was here! It is like her. The eyes, the set of the neck on the shoulders. Frank!" she exclaimed. "This is not Aunt Patrice. It is a picture of Marie Antoinette, the beautiful Queen of France, who was beheaded when

your grandfather was there." She turned the miniature to look at the back of it. The case had been torn away.

"It is strange; it is a beautiful miniature," Mrs. Wood said. "How could it have come out into the woods?"

"Keep it, mother; but tell me that I may have the sail-boat? There is some wind, but the weather is fine. There is no danger."

"You may go, Frank. I wish Oronco could go with you; he knows much more of the ways of boats."

"Oh, no, mother,—I could not take him; you know the poor Indian's weakness, he loves the firewater too well, and in the city ——"

"Yes; I understand," Mrs. Wood said. "Well, God and His dear mother will protect you. I will ask the girls to get ready a great packet of bread and meat, and some bottles of dandelion beer you are so fond of."

"Thank you, mother! Let us hope! I am sure that this great doctor will not refuse. I'll go and fix the mast. Oronco and I took it out for the winter."

Frank crept upstairs first. All was quiet in his father's room. His sister, Clarissa, hearing his footfall, came out of the room.

"His eyes are closed; we think that he may sleep." Frank nodded. He whispered to Clarissa, who was just a year younger than himself.

"Oh, I hope you will bring him," she said, fervently. "We shall not be afraid. Oronco and Tim will be here."

Tim was a small boy, hired to do light work.

Frank smiled.

"Oronco is worth ten men," he said.

Gertrude and Ann and Charlotte, the other sisters, had already stocked the boat when he reached the pier. Little Charlotte bore, as her part, a crock of her favorite cookies. Frank worked with a will. It did not take him long to fit the mast, and Tim had brought the sail down and was about to put it on board, when old Chloe, the black servant, appeared with a white china jar.

"The Lord bress you, Mass' Frank," she said, "but you jes' offer the doctor dis nice jar of my preserved yellow tomatoes. You jes' have

him eat one, and he will come with you. Lord bress you; he couldn't say no."

Tim had gone up to the house for a large needle, and Frank was sitting in the stern of the boat, smiling at Chloe's confidence, when two men were seen on the mound at the east side of the house. They were mounted. Frank could not make out their features.

He knew that they were strangers. He was about to move toward the bow, with the intention of jumping ashore, when the boat went forward swiftly, and before he could reach land a wide space of water stretched between him and the pier. At the same time the two strangers galloped furiously towards the bank. Frank called out in alarm. There were no oars aboard the boat. The sail lay where Tim had left it, on the pier. The space between the boat and the pier widened quickly. Frank was helpless,—the boat seemed propelled by an unseen power, and it made directly for the opposite shore.

Frank's first impulse was to jump into the river and swim ashore. But he checked it.

Why should he let his boat go gliding off without him?

The boat had been carelessly tied to the pier by a thin rope, which was generally coiled at the bow. Frank noticed that this was taut, and that a large mass of green leaves floated directly in front of the boat, which cut the water rapidly.

In bewilderment, Frank glanced backward at the shore. The men on horseback were standing on the pier, in evident doubt. One of them dashed swiftly along the bank of the creek, in the hope of finding another boat. The second raised his gun and called out:

"Stop! or I fire."

Frank could not stop; the boat glided even more rapidly forward. There was a puff of smoke, but it came from the pistol of the man on the bank of the creek. The other one did not fire until Frank had thrown himself at full length in the bottom of the boat.

The ball sped within an inch or two of the boat. Frank heard its whistle in the water. He was going he knew not whither; he dared not rise and pull the rope which seemed to be

in the grasp of some strong creature. He had read somewhere of voyagers pulled out to sea by monstrous fish that seized the painters of their boats. Fortunately, he reflected, this monster could not drag him out to sea ; it was too far away, and he knew every winding in the river for miles and miles.

There was another report ; a bullet whizzed over him, and he heard shouts from the shore. Still the boat kept on.

Frank prayed with all his might ; his heart was heavy and his mind full of dread.

What did these men want ? Why were they shouting at him ? What mischief might they not do to the dear and helpless in the house ? His only hope now was that the mysterious power which propelled his boat might take him out of reach of the bullets of these " murderers,"—for so he called them in his thoughts. Once out of reach of the bullets, he felt that he could rid himself of this strange creature, which was dragging farther and farther towards the middle of the great stream. He felt for his knife ; it would be easy to cut the rope and free himself. His knife was not in his

pocket; he had left it with the sail on the pier. He did what was usual to him in an emergency when all seemed hopeless,—he repeated the "Hail Holy Queen." He heard another shot; this time from the pistol. He knew by the sound, that he had almost reached mid-stream.

He could hear the swish of the water against the sides of the boat growing less rapid, and another sound as of slow breathing grew more rapid. The great fish or river monster which was dragging him through the water was evidently growing weary.

Frank thought with all his might, he was in the hands of God; he could not help himself,—and he felt certain that God would help him.

It was plain that the boat was out of range of the men on the pier, since they had ceased to shoot. By the motion of the boat he knew that his pilot had made a turn around the island in the middle of the river. A great branch rasped the back of his hand, and a shower of young elm leaves fell about him. They were close to the island. Suddenly the speed of the boat increased; the breathing of the creature grew

quicker. Frank resolved to rise and have a hand-to-hand combat for liberty, when all grew dark and a grating sound from the keel of the boat told Frank that he was no longer in the river.

II.

MYSTERIOUS ENEMIES.

FRANK felt the dash of cold water on his face; he had no chance to struggle; the hand that clutched his throat was a skilful one. Frank thought of the poor ducks he had seen Oronco strangle. He was thrown with a thud, not into the river, but into a round-keeled boat. This he was sure of, because he kept his senses about him.

He heard a whisper; he could not tell where the whisper came from,—but he heard it,—

"Paddle softly!"

Everything about him was dark; he could, as he lay in the bottom of the boat, see a red glare in the air,—no doubt the light of his pursuers. He heard a crash, and then loud voices. The pursuing boat had evidently struck the other boat or been struck by it. Frank had learned to obey. He felt that the whisper

must have come from a friend, although he could not imagine who the friend could be. It seemed to him that it would be well to get out of range of the pursuing boat; he raised himself to a sitting posture. He realized that he was in a canoe; he put out his hands and paddled gently and noiselessly. He saw the red light stationary, and he could make out the dark outlines of both boats against the lighter darkness. He strained his ears to listen.

What the two pursuers found when their boat had touched Frank's is easily told.

"At last, Gaspard, we have the boy;" cried one. "Tis a good night's work!"

"Seize him, Léon!" answered the other man, as the boat recoiled, and was sent onward against the side of Frank's boat by a quick pull of Gaspard's oars.

"Seize him!" called out Gaspard again.

But Frank had already been seized, and had tumbled into the canoe. His throat still felt the grasp of the fingers that had clutched it.

Gaspard, the older of the two men, jumped into Frank's boat, lantern in hand; he found himself face to face with Oronco

"I will play another," said Oronco. And, if he ever laughed, he would have laughed then. Before Gaspard and his friend realized what he was about to do, he had, with a sudden and unexpected twist of his body, upset their boat. Both men struggled in the water. With a skilful movement of the oars, Oronco sent his boat out further into the stream. Frank heard the cries of the men, suddenly thrown into the chill water; at the same moment Oronco reached the canoe.

"Oh, Oronco!" said Frank, "you have saved me again!"

"Yes," said Oronco.

"Somebody is drowning," cried Frank. "Over there! See!"

"Yes," said Oronco. "I put them there. Let the fish eat them!"

"We cannot let them drown!"

"Why not," said Oronco. "It is better to let them drown than to cut them with my knife. They would have taken you away or killed you. Why not?"

"Because we are Christians."

The cries redoubled. Gaspard had grasped

the keel of the upturned boat and was holding his companion with his left hand. "Aidez-moi!" he called out. "Aidez-moi, pour l' amour de Dieu! He says, "Help! Help! in the name of God!"

"I must go to them, Oronco. We must assist them," exclaimed Frank.

"Stay," said Oronco sullenly, "I will go, since I must,—but you will yet be sorry that they did not die."

Oronco paddled swiftly to the upturned skiff, and with the skill of a man quite at home in the water, righted it. Gaspard jumped into the boat, and Oronco tossed his companion after him.

"Now,—go!" he said. "Go."

Gaspard did not wait. His instinct told him that the Indian might not care to be thanked, he silently dipped the oars in the water and made for the Jersey bank of the river.

Frank heard Oronco muttering to himself. He was not content that the pursuers should escape so easily. His face took a kindlier look when he saw Frank. He was very fond of Frank.

"Ha," he said. "They almost had you. You were the buffalo, they were the hunter, and I was the Indian that shot the hunter and got the buffalo myself."

"I was much afraid," said Frank. "I thought they had me. I was sure that I was gone,—sure! How did you manage to save me?"

"I used my eyes," said Oronco, throwing one oar over the canoe. "You started off. The men found one of Bartlett's boats tied in the creek. They took it and rowed down the stream at random, for they could not have seen you. They were far ahead when I reached my canoe which I had left among the trees a quarter of a mile in the creek. But I flew after them. You know the rest." Oronco grunted with satisfaction.

"How can I ever thank you, Oronco?" exclaimed Frank. "You have saved me from some terrible thing, — I know not what."

"You should have let me kill those bad men," said Oronco, clutching the air, as if he were strangling ducks.

"Oh, no, Oronco, we have been taught to forgive our enemies."

"But they will kill you."

"I don't know. I wish I did know what they want. You have made them afraid, Oronco; they will not dare to attack me now."

"I will stay with you. The Bartletts had come to your house when I left,—they will protect your people."

"I am afraid, Oronco,—for the first time in my life, I am afraid. There seems to be an enemy, everywhere, an unseen enemy. Oronco, I am glad that you are with me!"

Oronco was pleased.

"I wish I had tied them up and left them on the ground to dry," said Oronco. "But they'll not trouble us as long as I am with you."

With a sigh of relief, Frank climbed into the boat. The canoe was tied to the stern. Softly the bow of the boat cut the river-water which still had the chill of winter in it. Softly Oronco sang to himself, keeping time to the paddle-like motion of his oars. Softly Frank dropped his oar and sank with his head between his hands into the bottom of the boat.

Oronco gently covered him with the blanket; he was asleep and Oronco was glad. As for himself, he had learned all the tricks of his Indian ancestors. He could sleep standing, he could sleep rowing, and he closed his eyes now and dozed,—knowing well that, if even a bee, hidden somewhere among the withered apple-blossoms in his canoe, should awaken and buzz, he would awaken too.

There were no steamboats to fear; for on all the wide bosom of the ocean and the surface of the noble Delaware, there was then no ship without sails. And strange to say, Oronco would have seen any light ahead of him for a long distance, even though his mind was almost asleep.

No white boy could understand or imitate Oronco's faculty of sleeping and yet being alert. And Oronco could not have understood how any human being could surrender himself to sleep as Frank did. The heavy, almost death-like sleep of the whites was unknown to creatures of the woods like Oronco.

For a time, Frank Wood forgot all his fears and anxieties, and Oronco revelled in half-wak-

ing dreams in which Frank's enemies were in his power with no boy near to save them. Oronco's Christianity at present was due to his affection for Frank. Mrs. Wood had tried to teach him his Catechism, but had not succeeded. He tried to imitate Frank and he went to Mass with him. When Frank and his grandfather had been in Paris Oronco was with them. But he had seen such terrible things there that he had declared that some Christians were worse than his own savage brethren. It was not often that the Wood family could hear Mass. Occasionally, however, they had the great happiness, and they appreciated it so much, that whenever there was such an opportunity, all the members of the family went to Holy Communion. Oronco, however, although he would have protected the good priest with his life, was still much of a savage. If it were not for Frank, he would long ago have relapsed into the paganism of his ancestors. His love for Frank was of a softening influence. Whether he should ever be really a Christian or not would depend, humanly speaking, on Frank's example. And now as these

two glide swiftly on towards the Quaker town, one may pause a moment to say that the stumbling-block in the way of Oronco's conversion was Frank's bad temper. Oronco could not understand why he should not scalp his enemies when Frank talked loud, grew red in the face and threatened with due vengeance all who opposed him. It is true that Frank repented at once. But this made the matter seem all the more strange to Oronco. He never repented. If he knew that it was wrong to scalp an enemy he would never have done it. If Frank threatened to kill George Bartlett when George took all his seal-skins,—for in the last centuries seal were not uncommon in the Delaware, in the winter time,—Oronco could not understand why he did not do it. To threaten and not to perform was, according to Oronco's creed, a foolish thing. And when Frank cooled off and George Bartlett explained that he had mixed up Frank's skins with his by mistake, Oronco was bewildered. If he had been in George Bartlett's place he would have killed Frank; in Frank's place he would have killed George. That the matter should

end without bloodshed appeared strange to him.

Frank would have been shocked he known that his example helped to keep his friend Oronco from being a good Christian. He had yet to learn that he could not govern this Indian without having first learned to govern himself.

The boat, with the canoe attached, glided in the early dawn, nearer and nearer to Philadelphia.

The river was alive with brilliant points of sunlight as Oronco and Frank, with wide-open eyes, gazed at the straggling houses along the banks of the Delaware. At the end of the last century Philadephia was very different from what it is to-day.

The boys breakfasted. The provisions in the boat supplying the necessaries.

Frank's spirits rose, as he finished his third piece of bread and butter.

"Was it a dream, Oronco?" he asked.

"It was a dream that I scalped your enemies, —for they are not dead."

A quick breeze had been blowing since mid-

night, and the boats, with it in their favor, scarcely needed the oars at all.

"We have come quickly,—and I slept,—and you! Poor Oronco! I am afraid you did all the work."

"I did no work; I slept too,—the wind helped us. It is a good wind."

"Oh, Oronco, I wish it had been a dream! Why do those men hate me so!"

"Ugh," said Oronco, eating some cold beef. "The whites are a hating race. Not long ago the British hated you Americans and you drove them out of the country. There are men, British at heart, who hate the Americans still. These men may be British in their hearts."

Frank smiled.

"The British are gone,—these may be some Tory sympathizers in our part of the country. But they do not know me. Oronco, we must go first to the house of the physician and then to Dr. Franklin's. The physician was a great man:—they say that he was once doctor at the court of France. Oh, if he will only go to father! We will run back with him at once!"

"Yes," said Oronco.

"But the men!—the men!" Frank said, suddenly remembering the adventure of the previous night. "How can I go back home, if they are there!"

"They are not there," said Oronco, his keen black eyes lighting up. "See!"

Past them glided a sail-boat, cutting the water into a rippled path of white and silver. In its stern sat Gaspard, his face turned from them,—managing the one sail was his companion.

Frank could not speak. He strained his eyes; and then, just as Gaspard turned his eyes towards him, he threw himself into the bottom of the boat.

Oronco met Gaspard's glance coldly. He snatched his knife from his belt and waved it in the sunlight, and the sunlight flashing on his teeth and the shining knife made him a most unpleasant object to Gaspard.

The sail-boat sped on. Oronco, who could read, had time to see that it bore the name "Glow-worm" painted in red letters on its side. It soon became a mere white square against the blue sky.

Frank was white and trembling. Oronco's countenance showed no change.

"I wish I could turn back."

"And your father——"

"Thank you, Oronco. I will be brave. Yes, I must go straight on,—and think of my father and duty. I must go straight to the doctor's."

They landed at the foot of High Street. Oronco covered the boat with the blanket and left it and the canoe in charge of a friend, who was fishing on the shore. There was no danger that anybody would touch Oronco's property. The boys and idlers knew him too well for that.

"You go to the doctor's," Oronco said. "I must buy some things at the market."

Frank was uneasy ; he did not like to have Oronco leave him for a moment, but he was too proud to say so. He took the jar of preserved tomatoes and started up High street, having made Oronco promise to meet him in fifteen minutes' time in front of Dr. Franklin's house.

The doctor lived in a court that opened from

High Street. His house was of three stories, ornamented with two white plaster pillars in each side of the door ; Frank ascended two soapstone steps and touched the knocker politely, as his mother had always taught him that city people expected him to do. The door opened, a man in a long dressing-gown stood beside him, in the shadowed hall. Frank heard the click of a lock behind him ; the doctor looked very impressive and stately in the gloom, and Frank concluded that he would not offer old Mammy's gift of the tomatoes to him.

"Ah, Monsieur," said the voice of the doctor, "you are here."

Frank's heart seemed to stand still. The doctor was Gaspard.

III

A FLASH IN THE PAN.

FRANK turned to the door. It had locked of itself. He was imprisoned. Gaspard looked him full in the face.

"So!" he said, in English, "you are here."

"I am here, sir," Frank said, in a low voice, "to see a doctor. My father is ill."

"I am a doctor," Gaspard said, "and," he added, with a grim smile, "I have seen your father; he is not seriously ill. I have visited your house recently, as perhaps you know. Your father will live. I left a potion with him that relieved him."

Frank looked at the man closely A boy can generally tell whether a man is telling the truth or not. An unspoiled boy,—a boy who does not lie himself,—can guess when others are lying.

"Will my father grow better?" he asked, forgetting everything but this great thing.

"Your father?" asked Gaspard, as if absent-minded. "Your father? Oh, yes. His is an interesting case. And, though I was in a great hurry to find you,—I may now say that I am charmed to make your acquaintance,—I stopped to examine your father. He will be able to rise from his bed to-morrow. A week from to-day he will be well."

Frank looked Gaspard straight in the eyes. The man smiled.

"I am telling you the truth," he said.

"Thank God!" Frank said.

Gaspard's face darkened.

"You must not use that name here," he said, "you may thank Nature but not God. As long as you stay here, I will have no religious reference. Mark that!"

Frank was not moved by the frown.

"No man can separate me from God," said Frank, boldly making the sign of the cross.

Gaspard bounded towards him. Gaspard was a strong man,—thin, wiry, athletic. The boy was no match for him; but he stood with his back to the door; under his arm was dear old Mammy's jar of preserved tomatoes, which

had stood in the morning sun for some time it was tightly corked, but Frank had jostled the jar, so that the brandied paper which covered the cork had rubbed off.

There was a look in Gaspard's eye which Frank Wood did not like,—a look that was full of dislike.

"It would do me good to hit that hated face from your shoulders," cried Gaspard, bending over Frank, who had made no motion of defence. "I hate it,—I hate it as much as I hated your father."

Frank did not move; his face was deadly pale; he felt that he was in the power of this strange creature, who was no doubt a maniac. And yet he was not afraid. He knew that one of two things must happen to him: he should die or God would save him. In either case, he was in the hands of God.

"You hated my father," Frank said, the thought of his father still uppermost in his mind, "why did you save him?"

"The sight of your face drives me wild," Gaspard said. "In it I read years of tyranny and oppression,—death and terror."

There was such a look of hate in Gaspard's eyes that the boy turned sick at heart. He kept his back against the door. Acting on a sudden impulse he lifted the whistle he wore tied to a string and blew with all his might. The shrill sound died away hopelessly. Who could hear it? If there were people in the house, they were in the pay of Gaspard. And, outside, there was no one who could help. Frank realized this, as he let the whistle fall.

The sound of the whistle seemed to exasperate Gaspard. He drew his knife from the breast of his dressing gown and rushed at Frank. But now a singular thing happened. Frank, unarmed and helpless, facing the furious Gaspard, gave himself up for lost. Suddenly there sounded the pop of a cork. Gaspard started back, dazed and blinded, his face covered with a thick yellow substance which trickled down his neck. Frank at once realized what had happened. Old Mammy's tomatoes had fermented in the hot sun and had exploded,—the cork hitting Gaspard straight between the eyes. Gaspard gasped, started back, and, in raising his hands to his blinded eyes, dropped his knife.

Old Mammy's preserved tomatoes had presented themselves to Gaspard, the doctor, with a vengeance.

A stairway ran up from the entry. The hall was gloomy, but a flood of the morning light was on the steps of the stairs. There must be a window or an opening somewhere above, Frank thought. He dropped the jar; it fell with a crash, and Frank rushed past the blinded man and mounted the stairs two steps at a time. The flood of light came from the top of the house. Up Frank went. Three doors opened on the second landing. He dashed past them, and found himself at the foot of a ladder evidently leading to the attic of the house. He mounted it as quickly as he could. He found himself in the attic. The sunshine poured in from a wide dormer window. All sorts of odds and ends were scattered about. Alas! there was no door. As in many other old fashioned houses, the garret was a kind of platform built over the other rooms. The ladder led to it; it was entered through a hatchway, for which Frank could see no covering. His eye glanced quickly over everything in the room, and a

large square mattress leaning against the wall attracted it. He threw this over the hatchway at once. It was closed. A large oaken arm-chair was near at hand. One of its legs had disappeared, and Frank made a great noise in dragging it across the floor. He threw it on the matress.

He looked about for a weapon of defence, and found a broken poker. At least he would fight for his freedom. He tried the window; it was narrowly barred, and the panes of glass were small. There was no chance of escaping in that way. He must fight for life and freedom. He looked at the poker, and his heart sank when he remembered that this bent piece of iron alone stood between him and liberty,—perhaps between him and death! He stood with his back against the wall, facing the hatchway and said his morning prayers fervently. He was not good at making up prayers. The "Our Father" and the "Hail Mary" were those he knew best; he said them over and over again. There was a sound of footsteps near, and of quick words and exclamations.

Frightened as he was,—and I think that an

older man than Frank might have been frightened under the circumstances,—Frank could not help smiling at the picture of Gaspard, covered with the yellow tomatoes. He remembered with special delight, even at this moment, that a bit of lemon peal had hung on one of Gaspard's ears.

The noise below grew louder. Steps were heard on the ladder. In desperation, Frank blew the whistle Oronco had made for him from a rare piece of wood.

* * * * * *

In the meantime Oronco had gone to the market in the middle of High Street, where fresh meat,—indeed meats of all sorts,—and dried fruits and vegetables were for sale. He sought a favorite corner where sat a stout negro woman, with a charcoal furnace before her, on which boiled a fragrant broth in a huge black pot.

"Ho, Oronco," she said, "the pepper pot is good this morning. What have you brought me?"

Oronco drew from his pouch a bunch of herbs.

"For heat in head," he said. "Indian cure."

The woman nodded, and stored the herbs in the big pockets of her apron. She ladled a great portion of the thick broth, which consisted of tripe, potatoes and several fragrant herbs, highly peppered. Oronco was about to eat the compound, with a grunt of satisfaction, when he raised his head suddenly, and his long ears seemed actually to erect themselves, as the ears of a trained dog do at his master's call.

He finished the "pepper pot" at a gulp, and moved quickly away.

"Only one bowl," exclaimed the negro woman, in amazement. "Only one! Oronco usually takes six!"

But Oronco was making directly for a court which opened on High Street, now known in Philadelphia by the name of Market Street. He hied with great speed until he reached the row of houses, of which Dr. Gaspard's was one. He stood and listened!

A small child with a rude doll made of rags stood on one of the soapstone steps; a negro servant watched her while peeling potatoes in a glittering pewter dish. This was in front

of the next house to Dr. Gaspard's. There was nothing to distinguish his house from the others. The doctor's name was not even under the great brass knocker.

Orōnco stopped, to listen.

He heard nothing.

"Did you see a boy go into one of these houses?" asked Oronco of the negro woman. She shook her head. He repeated the question.

"Nein," she said.

This puzzled Oronco. He turned to the little girl. She looked at him from her wide-open eyes, but she did not take her finger from her mouth. He appealed again to the negro woman. She said again, "Nein."

Oronco did not know that Dinah had been brought up in a Dutch settlement outside the city, and that she spoke only Low Dutch.

However, he could not waste time. He astonished the woman by putting his ear against the wall of the house,—only for an instant. Then he moved to Gaspard's house, and placing his ear against the warm bricks he listened.

"Ugh!" he said.

He was satisfied the bricks faintly vibrated

with the sound of Frank's whistle,—faintly, so faintly that no dull ear could have discovered it. But Oronco was a child of the woods.

He sprang upon the steps and made the stout door ring with the thud of the knocker. There was no reply. He wielded the knocker again, as it was never wielded before. No reply.

Dinah, frightened, seized the child by the hand and rose. As she did so two things happened. Frank's whistle rang out and Dinah dropped her shining pan,—the potatoes rolling out on the pavement.

Oronco looked up; he ran to the opposite side of the court, carrying Dinah's pan in his hand. Its surface caught the sunlight, as he waved it in his right hand, and sent arrow after arrow of light into the attic window of Gaspard's house. An answer came at once. Three whistle-notes sounded,—four long, four short and sharp. Oronco knew where his friend was.

IV.

IN THE ATTIC.

WHEN Frank had sounded his whistle desperately, he waited for a response. None came. It was plain to him that Oronco was not in the neighborhood. If the Indian were near him, he would have answered at once.

Frank heard voices below him, and heavy steps on the ladder. His hour was come,—that hour which must decide whether he was to be a prisoner or not,—perhaps live or die. He prayed with all his heart. At first, the fear of these strange men was terrible to him. Why did they follow him? The mystery of their actions added terror to them.

He moved everything that could be moved and covered the mattress with odd pieces of furniture. He had little hope that this frail defence would last long. The men below might set fire to the mattress; they might suffocate

him ; he tried the bars of the dormer window ; they were strong, tight and new.

The talk below him ceased. The men were plotting something ; a thrill of fear ran through him. Then he prayed :

"Help me."

His fear was so great that he could not remember the whole of *Pater* and *Ave*. Strange as it may seem, it struck him that, if he should ever be safe again, he would pray a great deal. In his great extremity, the power of praying seemed to desert him. He could only strain his ears for some sound from below or for the answering whistle from Oronco.

There was silence. Then a passing boy was heard singing "Yankee Doodle," a song which the British soldiers had used in derision, but which the Americans had honored. The boy's song changed to the fashionable French air called "Ca ira" which the Philadelphians had adopted, in spite of General Washington's often expressed dislike to the tune, which was the war cry of the French Revolutionists.

Oh, if he were only down in the street, free ! Oh, if he were only out of this house, he would

never grumble! How happy, he thought, was the poorest boy in the streets of Philadelphia!

He would not blow his whistle again. Of what use would it be? Oronco could not know of his peril. By the time Oronco would be alarmed by his absence, he might be dead or a a prisoner. He could only wait and ejaculate a prayer. Let them come; he would defend himself to the last.

On the wall opposite to him, he saw a flash of light. It made a luminous spot on the white-wash. Somebody was passing, perhaps with a tin-pail in his hand. The flash was followed by a quick succession of flashes, and this succession of flashes was quickly repeated.

Frank's heart leaped within him. Again the same flashes shone from the wall. The boy knew what they meant.

Oronco and he, wandering through the Jersey swamps and woodlands, were often far apart. They had arranged a code of whistle-sounds; but, as whistles are sometimes mislaid or out of order, they had been supplemented by others. And the one most used was of light-flashes from the blade of a knife or from shining tin.

Oronco had learned so many arts that white men never know; Frank had been often astonished by his knowledge. He would put his ear to the ground, arise and say,—

"There are men a quarter of a mile away."

Then he would pick up a polished stone or flash the blade of his broad knife to the sunlight. A series of whistles, if the men were near enough and, if they were Indian friends of Oronco, would be the answer.

"They are friends," Oronco would say, and he would name them. In the winter, when the sun shot its light against the unbroken snow, Oronco used the flash-light system of signals effectively. It was in this way that he had become aware of the existence of the two seals on the ice. A friendly squaw had signalled, and he had caught them.

Frank read the message on the opposite wall as quickly as a telegrapher reads by means of the click of his instrument. It read,— "Danger? Whistle three times." Frank obeyed; his whistle rang out long and shrill. At that moment, the mattress and all that Frank had piled upon it were thrown into the

air, and Gaspard's head appeared at the opening in the floor, followed by his companion. Frank's enemies had been working silently. The mattress was thrown against him ; he found himself thrust between it and the window. Again he sent three shrill blasts from his whistle.

In answer there came a thundering knock at the door below. It was followed by another and another.

The sounds gave Frank courage and hope. He resolved that if he should come from this danger safe, he would never commit his besetting sin again. Afterwards, it seemed wonderful that he should have thought at such a moment of his past or his future life. But, however strange it was, he did think of his past and future and of that sin,—that sin of anger,—which tempted him every day of his life. Frank felt that he was near death ; he did not want to die, and he, almost unconsciously, offered his resolve not to sin again to God who could keep him alive, if He would. At heart, Frank was a deeply religious boy.

He threw the mattress from him and stood

facing the two men. Gaspard looked at him, with a smile of triumph.

"So, my dear friend, we have you at last," Gaspard said. "You are ours. We can do with you as we please."

"Oh, no," said Frank, summoning all his courage, as he heard the resounding clangor at the lower door, "not as you please. You will have to conquer me first!"

Gaspard saw that Frank was unarmed, and his capture seemed easy.

"There is no use struggling," he said, "and your whistle will not do you much good. There is nobody in sight,—nobody in sight or within hearing."

The sound of Oronco's heavy kicking at the front door reached the group in the attic.

"Who is at the door?" asked Gaspard, of his assistant.

"It is my friend, Oronco," said Frank, losing all fear.

"Go! See!" Gaspard ordered; but before the order could be obeyed, the front door was heard to open inward with a heavy crash, and Oronco's voice was heard in the hall.

Gaspard turned pale. He was unprepared for this.

"Go," he said, "lock the door at the end of the corridor. We can manage him later. And now," Gaspard said, turning to Frank, "you shall answer me one question. Where is the treasure that your grandfather brought from France? You may as well answer,—I know who you are. And no effort of yours will enable you to escape me. To trap you has been the mission of my life."

"Know who I am!" said Frank, in amazement. "Why everybody knows who I am! And as to the buried treasure, I wish I had it. I'm sure I wouldn't tell you or anybody else where to find it. I'm sure of that!"

Oronco had not waited for the corridor door to be locked. His head appeared in the opening of the floor. He bounded into the attic, followed by Gaspard's lieutenant.

"Oronco!" cried Frank. "Oh, how glad I am!"

Oronco grunted and looked about him. "Are you safe?" he asked.

"Safe! Thank God,—safe; but," he added,

"I shall not leave this house until I know why you have treated me thus."

"You know very well," said Gaspard, "you know very well, and your friend knows, too. He need not try to frighten me," continued Gaspard, in his broken English, "I fear not your friend. Do you know who this boy is, Indian?" asked the Frenchman, turning suddenly to Oronco.

"Frank Wood," said Oronco, his eyes glittering.

"No," said Gaspard, in a whisper, "he is Louis de Bourbon, King of France,—as some would call him!"

Oronco grunted. Frank laughed aloud.

"You are crazy," he said, "stark, staring mad. I am plain Frank Wood. Why, you yourself just spoke of my grandfather!"

"He was not your grandfather," said Gaspard. "He was your guardian. Look at yourself in a mirror;—you will see that you are very like the picture of the late Madame Capet, sometimes called Marie Antoinette, Queen of France."

"Certainly," answered Frank, smiling.

"But I am like my Aunt Patrice de Florent, who was of the household of the Queen. She was so much like Marie Antoinette,—whose soul God rest!——"

Gaspard made a gesture of scorn.

"That the Queen often sent her to represent her. Indeed, if my aunt had been in Paris when the Queen was murdered by the base and bloody brutes on that horrible day, she would —she has often said,—have suffered in her place, and no one would have been the wiser! I am no more the poor young dauphin, whose soul God help, too,—than you are!"

"You cannot deceive me," Gaspard said, gloomily. "You are the boy supposed to have died under the care of Simon, in the tower. I know that you are he whom some call Louis de Bourbon,—whom some aristocrats would like to call Louis XVII."

V.

TRAPPED.

WHILE he spoke, Oronco had examined in every detail the attic. He had struck his bare foot hard on the floor several times and moved uneasily from the spot he had at first occupied. Frank observed that he seemed to look at something at his feet and to move uneasily.

"Indian," said Gaspard, "would you be rich? Would you go where you please, have all the luxuries you want, barrels of firewater, scarlet cloth by the yard, feathers, horses?"

"Ugh!" said Oronco, assentingly.

"All this can be yours. This boy is not Frank Wood. He is the son of the late King of France."

Frank laughed again.

"I am the son of an honest father," he said, "and I am prouder of it than if I were the son

of an emperor. If you've been tracking me because of this foolish notion, you'd better give it up. I'm Frank Wood,—no more, no less. Why, we all know that the King and Queen of France were murdered and that little Louis died in the Temple in Paris. My mother tells about it with tears in her eyes."

"Ah," said Gaspard, vindictively, "she weeps for aristocrats. She is not your mother; she was your nurse; I know. Now, Indian," he continued, "I do not fear you; but I would have your help. This boy will bring us great treasure; you love money and firewater; guard him for us, and you shall have all you want."

Gaspard had acquired the opinion that all Indians were treacherous; he had known few, but these could be induced to do anything for "firewater," as they called whiskey. The answering sparkle in Oronco's eye seemed to confirm this opinion.

"I belong," Gaspard said, "to a small circle, sworn in secret to capture the young Louis,—Bourbon, the aristrocrats call him,—we, the people, call him Capet. He is in our grasp; I

have sought him everywhere. He must leave with us for France to-night."

"Oronco!" cried Frank, appealingly.

The Indian averted his eyes.

"What will you give me for this?" Oronco asked, in French, for he had learned that language.

"You know French?" said Gaspard.

"Yes. I lived in France."

"I will give five hundred pounds in English money."

"More."

"A thousand."

"Come back in an hour."

Gaspard hesitated.

"Your window is barred," said Oronco. "You will stay below. In an hour!"

"Oronco! Oronco!" exclaimed Frank, "you will not betray me. You will not be the means of taking me from my father and mother and little sisters. Oh, Oronco, they all love you so much! I will not believe this; it must be a dream, it *must* be!"

"I want money," said Oronco.

"Good!" said Gaspard, he nodded his head,

closed the door and left Frank and Oronco together, but he put his ear to the keyhole. He heard nothing; for Oronco and Frank were adepts in the deaf and dumb alphabet, and he used it now.

"Look at the floor!" he spelled on his fingers.

Frank looked; he saw that they were standing on a large trap door.

* * * * * *

Here an explanation seems to be necessary, in order that what followed may be understood. Gaspard was not really a doctor. At least, this is legend, supposed to have a basis in truth, on which these adventures are founded. He and his companion belonged to a band of men who had done their best to make the French revolution more bloody. The little son of Louis XVI. and Marie Antoinette had died in the Temple at Paris, murdered by the brutality of his jailer, Simon. But, even after the horrors of that horrible time had ceased,—horrors that seemed greater by contrast with the dignity of the American Revolution,—this band of men still kept their hatred of the name of Bourbon,

and, hearing that a boy who resembled the dead Prince was living in America, they had sought him out. It was their opinion that Louis was still alive, and they had what they thought was good reason to believe that he had been spirited away by an attendant who pretended to be his grandfather.

Gaspard, who had some knowledge of medicine, pretended to be a doctor, in order that he might meet many people, and perhaps discover where the supposed Louis was concealed. He knew that Frank's grandfather had taken from France a great number of jewels and many valuable things. He had come in possession of the key of the box which contained this treasure, but he did not know where the casket was concealed. Gaspard pretended not to believe in God; he hated the cross; his only desire was to help to throw France into a new and even more terrible state of revolution. The young king,—as he firmly believed Frank to be,—must be made to reveal the hiding-place of the treasure;—and then! Gaspard smiled fiendishly as he thought of what would happen. Louis the XVI. and Marie Antoinette had died,

—this boy should die too;—but not until Gaspard had secured the treasure. He listened at the keyhole for a time after he had left Frank and Oronco together. But he heard no sound.

"The Indian," he said, "is a traitor:—he will help me!"

In the meantime, Frank and Oronco continued to speak in the sign language.

"Oh, Oronco," Frank said, "for a moment I almost thought that you were about to give me up."

"Ugh!" Oronco said, forgetting the sign-language. Obeying his gesture, Frank looked at the floor; again he looked closely. He and Oronco were standing on a trap-door.

"See!" Oronco said, "that man could throw us into some pit or other at a moment's notice. When a white man is bad, he is very bad. Worse than Indian! Much worse!"

"I cannot believe that this man,—both these men,—are so bad."

"You will find out soon," Oronco said, with the tips of his fingers. "You will find out when this trap-door moves and lets you down into darkness."

Frank turned pale.

"What are we to do, Oronco?"

"We have gained time at any rate."

"True. You gained time,—I understand you, Oronco. How could I ever have doubted you?"

Oronco smiled; it was unusual with him; he looked very affectionately at Frank. He tried the bars of the window; they were firm; he seemed puzzled. Then he put his shoulder against the door. It was of solid oak.

"No," he said, "it is not like the front door. Let us try together." As softly as possible, the two pushed against the door. It did not move.

Frank thought that he detected in Oronco's usually immovable face a look of desperation.

"Oh, I wish I had gone to the great Dr. Franklin first," Frank said, "he is so learned, so clear, he would have saved me from this!"

"There is no use in wishing," said Oronco, "you pray, while I think. The men will come back soon."

Frank said his prayers with all his might. Probably no such prayers had ever ascended

from that house before. He forgot himself in his supplication, while Oronco thought.

The bars of the window were of iron and tight; the door was of sturdy oak and strong. Oronco was naturally suspicious. That trap-door might open at any moment—and he did not think further than that. What was to be done?

In the meantime, Frank prayed. And Oronco looked aimlessly about. He asked Frank for his whistle, and Frank gave it to him. Then Oronco remembered that there was nobody who could understand the signal, and he let the whistle dangle at his neck.

He began to drum gently against the wainscot. Afterwards he confessed that he had no motive in it; he did not know why he was moved to do it, but he continued to tap gently against the oak wainscot of the room.

* * * * * *

Up the river the Woods were in the greatest anxiety. Who were these strange men? What had they wanted? Was dear Frank safe?

The anxiety seemed to make Mr. Wood better.

"Where is Frank?" he asked.

"He has gone for the doctor," Mrs. Wood answered.

"But the night was so dark," Mr. Wood answered. "I fear that he may suffer. Oh, my dear!" he said to his wife, "I have dreamed horrible things. I thought in the night that Frank was in a net. The meshes were of steel. He was entangled. There was no hope. Oh, my dear, I must get up;—I cannot lie here thinking of it! Are you sure Frank had his scapular on when he left us?"

"Sure," said Mrs. Wood. "Frank not only wore the scapular, but he says the required prayers."

"I think that he will be safe," he answered. "But I am so anxious that I must get up."

Mrs. Wood and the children looked at him in amazement.

"We have been praying for this," she said, "but you have not walked for months."

"I know it," he said, "but I am so anxious, I must get up."

And to the amazement of his wife and children and old Mammy, who held up her hands in horror, Mr. Wood arose and walked. Then

the children, who were very grateful, knelt, to thank God. In their petitions, they prayed for Frank with all their hearts.

"I have often thought," said Mr. Wood, "that the big oak casket in the kitchen must contain something of value. I have been thinking of that all the afternoon."

"My dear husband," Mrs. Wood said, "it is cherry, not oak; you could not break it open with the sharpest axe."

"If we only had the key," sighed Mr Wood. "Do you know,—I think that it may be possible that the great treasure of the family is hidden in that casket."

"But you can never find it," said Mrs. Wood. "You might just as well think of cutting steel with a knife as of opening that box."

"Ah," said Mr. Wood, "I wish that we had the key."

Mrs. Wood and the children were so delighted at the improvement in Mr. Wood's health, that they humored him, and began to discuss the probability of finding that key.

VII.

SAVED.

FRANK WOOD watched Oronco with anxious eyes. He saw that for once the instinct of the Indian had failed and that there was no way out of the present position. Frank thought of the sins of anger he had so often committed. He had committed them wilfully,—that was the worst of it. He remembered how often he had given bad example to Oronco.

"Oh blessed Virgin," he prayed, "I resolve never to be angry again;—please cure father, and save Oronco and me by your prayers."

At this moment Oronco struck a place in the wainscot which gave out a hollow sound.

"Hear!" whispered Frank.

Oronco pressed hard against the panel; it gave way, and showed a vacant spot. Oronco held up the whistle, and pushed the panel farther aside. He found himself at the head

of a ladder. Frank understood his gesture. It meant, "I will go down; if I am in danger, I will whistle."

Oronco descended. Frank stood still, anxiously awaiting the result.

What if Gaspard should suddenly appear?

The thought had hardly passed through Frank's mind, when the door was pushed open, and Gaspard did appear.

"Ah," he said, looking round the room. "The Indian has gone; he has betrayed me;—he has betrayed me!"

Frank faced him. Gaspard drew from his belt a long knife.

"Little King," he said, "you ought to die at once. I must choose between your death and the treasure. If you live, you may tell me where the treasure is;—if you die, the last hope of the royal race of France will die."

"I am not the King," said Frank, fixing his eyes on the glittering steel.

Gaspard began to speak, but his companion entering, interrupted him.

"You must be quick, if the Indian has escaped," the new-comer said.

"Yes," said Gaspard, with a sigh, "we must kill this boy, but lose the treasure. Do you know this key, Louis Capet?" he added, drawing a heavy key of iron and ebony from his belt. "*Voila!* Do you know where the box that belongs to *that* is? Look at it!" He tossed the key to Frank. "Ah," he said, "you have seen it before?"

"No," said Frank, scarcely looking at the key.

"You have," Gaspard almost screamed. "I will spare your life,—yes, even the life of the hated Louis Capet, if you will tell me where to find the box, of which that is the key!"

"I cannot," said Frank.

"You lie!" exclaimed Gaspard; he rushed towards Frank, followed by his companion. Fortunately Frank stepped back, and suddenly the floor opened. Horrified, the boy saw Gaspard and his companion plunged into the darkness below. He stood, holding the key in his hand, on the very verge of a black gulf.

Oronco's head appeared from behind the panel; he grinned.

"I found the spring in the wall," he said.

"I touched it by chance ; I did not know that it was a spring,—and there they are !"

Frank and Oronco peered into the depths below. They could dimly see a chamber, with shaded windows, and there lay the two men groaning and unable to move. Gaspard had left the door open, and Frank and Oronco did not hesitate to take advantage of this fact. They ran into the street.

It was the work of a few moments to reach the State House. Just in front of that building, in Fifth Street, they saw the great Dr. Franklin, with his hair tied with a black ribbon, and his clothes seeming to be very neat and well made. He listened to their story with interest.

"Ah," he said, "so the doctor is Gaspard. His real name is Gaspard Marat, a relative of the infamous Terrorist. I am glad you have caught him in his own trap."

Dr Franklin notified the authorities, and the two unscrupulous conspirators were secured.

Gaspard died in jail, from his injuries ; the other man escaped, and was never seen again.

Frank took the key home with him.

You can imagine how glad his father and mother and the little girls and old Mammy were to see him, and how they trembled as he told of his adventures, and rejoiced when old Mammy's tomatoes exploded in Gaspard's face; —and how old Mammy laughed at that!

"And the best of all, father, is that you are well!"

"Yes, Frank, I thought of you, I prayed, and God seemed to give me strength, and I rose. Where did you get the big key? It bulges out of your pocket."

"The key? Oh, yes,—I forgot it," Frank said, handing it to his father.

Mr. Wood turned pale, as he received it.

"Why, Frank," he said, "I believe that this is the key to the casket in the kitchen."

He tried it; the key moved easily. Frank lifted the big lid, and there revealed to the amazed eyes of the family, lay the rubies, diamonds, and the gold coins,—in truth, the whole of their grandfather's treasure.

"God is good," exclaimed Mr. Wood, hanging his head, "and prayer is powerful!"

After that, there was no danger of want in

the house near the creek. Frank insisted that old Mammy should have a new frock ; the girls went to school at Philadelphia, and Mr. Wood's health was quite restored by the voyage across the sea he was enabled to take.

Later, when Frank Wood had become a prosperous merchant, he often spoke of his adventures, while Oronco, now gray-headed, sat at the opposite side of the hearth.

"Prayer did it," he always said.

"And why are you never angry any more?" Oronco often asked.

Frank did not answer; he kept the reason in his heart. Until she died, Frank's aunt, the Countess Patrice de Florent, trembled whenever she thought of the peril into which his likeness to the dead Dauphin had brought her nephew. When she came to America, with a group of noble folks and Monsieur de Lafayette, she was shown the house in High Street, with its secret panel and trap door. She refused her share of the treasure, and insisted that it be divided among her nieces. She revealed the fact of her father's having lost his keys, a portrait of the late Queen, and

some private letters in the fight on the steps of the Tuileries on the day of the slaughter of the Swiss guards. She insisted that Frank should write his adventures and draw a picture of Oronco: "for," she said, "it is well that these should appear in the annals of our family, with the story of the Châtelaine, our ancestress, the little tales of Donnet, and the narrative of the experience of our relatives, Gerald and Geraldine, who were shipwrecked in this new country long, long before I was born. When you come to Les Roses in Provence, you shall read of them in my great book." And when she went home to Provence, she wrote Frank's adventures out in a beautiful clear hand in her red velvet-covered volume, with many other stories of the O'Neils and the De Florents too numerous for this little book. When she had written these matters carefully, she placed the dates of each upon the wide margin of her pages.

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